

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

# MOTORSPORT NEWS

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**Jaguar's Formula E ace charges into the MN readers' questions, p22**

*Dutch master wins as Ferrari's Leclerc secures second spot in the Middle East*

# MAX SIGNS IT OFF IN STYLE WITH 15TH WIN OF THE SEASON



Max Verstappen was peerless on Sunday

By Matt James

World champion Max Verstappen says he has taken time to appreciate the efforts of his Red Bull Racing team after clocking up a record-breaking 15 wins in one season by clinching the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix on Sunday.

The Dutchman qualified on pole and was barely troubled on his run to victory, although Ferrari spoilt Red Bull's party when Charles Leclerc clinched runner-up spot to deny Verstappen's team-mate Sergio Perez second in the drivers' championship.

Verstappen said: "It's been a great team effort, especially after our tough start to the year. To turn it around like that I wouldn't have ever imagined, I think nobody in the team [would have imagined], but it's been really enjoyable to be part of the team."

Verstappen was 46 points behind Leclerc after three races of 2022, but the Milton Keynes team hauled itself back into contention.

"We have a lot of fun – of course we focus on the performance, but you also really need to enjoy the moment, appreciate the moment, and I think we did that," added Verstappen.

**Full report, p4**



## INTERVIEW

### HOW SMILEY CONQUERED TCR UK

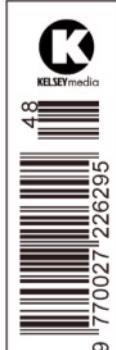
*The Northern Irishman's route to success p18*



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### THEY THINK IT'S ALL OVAL: IT IS NOW!

*How the BTCC boys tackled the Brisca F1 racers, p30*



**THE 2022 MN AWARDS VOTE FOR YOUR FAVOURITES! SEE PAGE 20-21**



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##### SPARES

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Flange, not semi-floating, suit std. axle

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Classic Ford wheels from £69.00 £82.80



pair £8.12 £9.75

pair £33.80 £40.56

pair £33.80 £40.56

from £15.90 £19.08

£24.50 £29.40

£10.50 £12.60

£67.60 £81.12

£299.50 £359.40

£65.00 £78.00

£119.50 £143.40

£139.50 £167.40

£149.50 £179.40



pair £174.50 £209.40

pair £204.50 £245.40

pair £184.50 £225.40

pair £214.50 £257.40

pair £16.80 £20.16

pair £49.50 £59.40

pair £49.50 £59.40

pair £49.60 £59.52

pair £36.50 £43.80

pair £63.50 £76.20

pair £14.90 £17.88

pair £59.50 £71.40

pair £31.00 £37.20

pair £19.50 £23.40

pair £29.60 £35.52

pair £6.00 £7.20

pair £29.00 £34.80

pair £19.00 £22.80

pair £32.19 £38.63

pair £5.00 £6.00

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Escort Mk1 front screen rubber

# COMMENT

Photos: Motorsport Images, Jakob Ebrey, Colin Casserley, Red Bull Content Pool



Vettel joined the top three in performing doughnuts after the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

# SAYING A FOND FAREWELL TO SEB

**I**t was a nice touch to let outgoing Aston Martin F1 driver Sebastian Vettel join the top three finishers at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix to go and perform doughnuts on the start straight.

The guard of honour that he walked through on the way to the grid was another emotional moment for the four-time World title winner, who was about to begin his 299th and final grand prix.

The German's legacy might be unclear (see column, page 17), but the reaction from the other drivers was heart-warming to see. The fact that he finished in the slipstream of Daniel Ricciardo – another driver who might well have been in his last top-flight Formula 1 race too – was an irony not missed.

The season was rounded off with yet another win from Red Bull and Max Verstappen, which was hardly a surprise, but what was out of the ordinary was that Ferrari got a strategy call right and helped Charles Leclerc into second place in a season where, by rights, he should have pushed his Dutch rival much, much harder.

In this issue, we get the lowdown from TCR UK champion Chris Smiley, who had a remarkable season to claim the crown in the Restart Racing Honda Civic. The former British Touring Car Championship race winner's tale is one of real dedication and commitment, from both the driver himself and from the crew behind him.

The incumbent of our readers' Q&A hot seat is Formula E ace Sam Bird, who is preparing for another season in the all-electric single-seater championship, which begins in January. He has had a long career in some of the most competitive categories in the world, and he has many insights to share in a fascinating interview.

We also reflect on last weekend's British Touring Car Championship BrisCA F1 Invitation race at Skegness, where 10 of the tin-top series' finest rolled up their sleeves and took each other on in close-quarter combat. It is a category where contact is allowed – indeed, it is almost encouraged. Those BTCC stars didn't need a second invite to do that, and the results were spectacular. Thanks must go to the BrisCA F1 fraternity for their welcome and several of the BTCC boys want to go back and have another go.

Finally, don't forget to make your voice heard in our MN Awards 2022. The polls close this week so make sure you make your choice soon. For the outcome, buy Motorsport News next week when the winners will be revealed.

**Matt James**  
Editor, Motorsport News  
matt.james@kelsey.co.uk



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Stars come out to play: BTCC meets BrisCA F1

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# FORMULA 1 REPORT: ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX

Photos: Red Bull Content Pool, Motorsport Images



Max took control at the start of the race



The winner celebrates his victory

# MAX DOMINATES TO SIGN OFF THE SEASON IN STYLE

Eyes turned to the battle for second spot as Leclerc pipped Perez. By **James Roberts**



Ferrari strategy helped Leclerc

**A** relatively easy 15th win in 2022 for Max Verstappen was the “perfect way to sign off the season” according to his race engineer Gianpiero Lambiase.

From pole, Verstappen finished comfortably ahead of Ferrari’s Charles Leclerc and his team-mate Sergio Perez under the floodlights at the Abu Dhabi season finale.

On the podium, Verstappen became the recipient of a new medal presented to the winner of a grand prix by the FIA, engraved to mark World Championship race number 1079.

In the closing stages, the main interest was in the fight for second place on the road – and in the points table. Perez was hunting down Leclerc but there was a certain amount of anxiety on the Ferrari pitwall, as the team fretted over the decision to one-stop in the 58-lap race was potentially the wrong one.

Perez had opted for a two-stop and in the final stint reduced a 18-second deficit to Leclerc on fresher rubber. But on this occasion, Ferrari *did* make the right call and Leclerc held on to deny Red Bull a 1-2 in the drivers’ championship – and by some margin retained second over Mercedes in the constructors’ race.

That was partly aided by Lewis Hamilton’s first mechanical retirement of the year. He too made one stop, and was equally concerned it wouldn’t pay off, as the other Ferrari of Carlos Sainz was closing in fast. But three laps from the chequered flag, Lewis suffered a problem with his shifts, was stuck in seventh gear, and had to pit to retire with hydraulic failure.

Hamilton and Sainz had earlier come together on the opening lap. Lewis managed to beat the Ferrari at the start, but on the run down to Turn 6 Sainz braked late and forced the British driver wide. The Mercedes cut across the chicane, bounced over a kerb into the air, and returned to the track ahead of the Ferrari. The stewards decided Sainz was not at fault and when Hamilton returned the place back to the Spaniard on lap four, they took no further action



Sebastian Vettel bade fare well to Formula 1 for good in Abu Dhabi

in penalising Lewis either. It appeared the impact with the kerb upset the balance of Hamilton’s Mercedes and his tardy first stint enabled George Russell to pass his team-mate, but when the Norfolk man made his pitstop on lap 15, his right-rear was slow to be changed. In the hurry to get back into the race, he was released into the path of Lando Norris and as the McLaren driver was forced to lock-up his brakes in the pitlane to avoid the Mercedes, Russell was struck with a five-second time penalty for an unsafe release.

After the pitstops, the race settled down with Verstappen leading, Leclerc second with Perez trying to close the gap for that all-important second place. Ironically – one year on from the controversial championship showdown in Abu Dhabi – Perez would have benefited from a safety car and for one moment it looked as if Nicholas Latifi would once again be responsible for deploying one.

On lap 39 his Williams was facing backwards in the Turn 5 barriers and Mick Schumacher was also pointing in the wrong direction. Replays showed the Haas driver tapping the Canadian into a spin and while they both rotated, they were

able to continue. No safety car this year...

Both Latifi and Schumacher were competing in what is anticipated to be their last-ever F1 races, but obviously would like to keep their options open for the future. The same is true of Daniel Ricciardo but, for one man, he’ll certainly hang up his helmet for good after Abu Dhabi.

With ‘The Final Lap’ writ large on his helmet, last weekend was an emotion occasion for four-time World champion Sebastian Vettel. There were glimpses of his old magic in the early stages of the race, but ultimately a one-stop strategy dropped him down the order.

Thanks to Hamilton’s retirement, Vettel was able to finish his 299th and final grand prix in 10th place and pick up one world championship point. But he finished just 0.63s behind Ricciardo. It was by that tiny margin that kept Aston Martin sixth overall and – although it was tied on 55 points with Alfa Romeo – it missed out on the extra millions of dollars of prize money and fifth place by the smallest of margins.

And that was that. Just the 105 days to wait until World championship race number 1080 next March...



An unsafe release ruined life for Brazilian GP hero Russell



# RACING NEWS



Hulkenberg is returning

## HULKENBERG RETURNS TO F1 WITH HAAS DRIVE

Nico Hulkenberg will make a full-time return to Formula 1 next season as he replaced Mick Schumacher at Haas.

The 35-year-old will line up alongside Kevin Magnussen at the American-owned team and he was due to test the car for the first time this week at the test in Abu Dhabi.

The German has made several substitute appearances in grand prix racing in recent seasons, driving for Racing Point in 2020 and Aston Martin earlier this season when Sebastian Vettel contracted Covid.

Hulkenberg, who won Le Mans for Porsche in 2015, was welcomed into the team by the squad's principal Gunther Steiner. He said: "I'm naturally very pleased to be welcoming Nico Hulkenberg back to a full-time racing role in Formula 1.

"The experience and knowledge base Nico brings to the team is clear to see – with nearly 200 career starts in F1 – and a reputation as being a great qualifier and a solid, reliable racer. These are attributes, which when you pair them together with Kevin Magnussen's experience, gives us a very credible and well-seasoned driver line-up which we believe will help push the team onwards up the grid."

Hulkenberg's last full season was in 2019 with the Renault team. He has taken part in 181 GPs in the last 13 seasons.

# BINOTTO EXPECTED TO DEPART AFTER TOUGH FERRARI SEASON

Sources say the Scuderia chief is on borrowed time at the Italian team



Photos: Motorsport Images

By Matt James

Italian media has reported that Ferrari's team principal Mattia Binotto will be replaced at the Maranello team ahead of the fresh season.

Ferrari was in a commanding position in the championship chase early on this year but has slipped up operationally and with strategy on several occasions throughout the campaign. Charles Leclerc's second-placed finish at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix last weekend helped the Monaco-based driver to runner-up position in the drivers' standings, but he only narrowly beat Red Bull's Sergio Perez. Leclerc ended up 146 points behind title winner Max Verstappen and Ferrari was more than 200 points adrift of Red Bull in the constructors' chase.

Binotto said the season had been a tough one. He said: "It has certainly been a difficult one because criticism is never easy to be managed.

"More than that, for me trying to keep



Leclerc clinched second place

the team focused and concentrated on the job. The criticisms are there to distract the team. And keeping a team focused is never easy.

"It has been difficult, but that will make me only stronger in the future. We need to count only on ourselves and that is the most important lesson of the season."

Binotto is thought to be on thin ice and could be replaced in the coming weeks. Reports in the Italian media last week said he will be replaced by Alfa Romeo team boss Frederic Vasseur.

## RICCIARDO EXPECTED TO RETURN TO TEST ROLE AT RED BULL

Ousted McLaren driver Daniel Ricciardo is expected to ink a deal with Red Bull imminently to become its test and reserve driver.

The Australian, who raced for Red Bull from 2014 to 2018, is assessing his options and Red Bull advisor Helmut Marko told German press last week that the 33-year-old's new role was due to be rubber-stamped soon.

Ricciardo's role is likely to include promotional and simulator work as well as being the reserve driver. The Australian finished ninth on his final outing with McLaren at Abu Dhabi last weekend.

Ricciardo told Autosport: "It's

obviously been pretty tiring the last couple of years with the struggles, so it was pretty clear to me shortly after the summer break that, that was what I wanted, and what was going to be best for me.

"So then it was: 'OK. What's the next best thing?' And the more I thought about it, to obviously be involved to some degree with a top team, that was obviously the preference.

"But it's not done. So that's why I haven't come out and confirmed it, because that's still the truth: it's not done. But I can obviously look you in the eye now and say it's the most likely option at this stage."



Ricciardo drove his final race for McLaren in Abu Dhabi on Sunday



Iwasa was forced to defend hard for F2 feature race victory

## LAWSON AND IWASA CLAIM FINAL F2 WINS

Carlin driver Liam Lawson and Red Bull-backed Ayumu Iwasa shared the spoils in the final rounds of the Formula 2 series in Abu Dhabi last weekend.

Iwasa claimed the feature race victory after fending off multiple attacks from Aston Martin F1 reserve driver Felipe Drugovich, who had claimed the crown before the rounds in the Middle East. The Japanese DAMS racer took the win by just under one

second from his MP Motorsport rival, while New Zealander Lawson in third spot. Briton Olli Caldwell was four laps back after a troubled race in his Campos Racing car.

In the sprint race, Lawson overtook early leader Richard Verschoor just before the midpoint of the race and scampered clear. Drugovich rounded out the podium finishers. Caldwell was 16th.

## SARGEANT LANDS THE FINAL WILLIAMS SEAT IN F1; SCHUMACHER LEFT WITHOUT A DRIVE

Formula 2 racer Logan Sargeant scored enough points in the final Formula 2 races in Abu Dhabi to assure him of the final spot on the grand prix grid in 2022.

The American finished his campaign with fourth spot in the F2 points, and that, allied to the running he has already done

in the Williams F1 car, means that he now has enough superlicence points to join Alex Albon at the British team next year.

Team principal and chief executive officer Jost Capito said at the US Grand Prix: "We feel he's ready to race in F1 and on the condition he has enough

superlicence points he will be our second driver next year."

The move means that Mick Schumacher, who was ousted from Haas and has been replaced by Nico Hulkenberg, will not be making a grand prix return in 2023. The German

has, however, been linked to a testing role with Mercedes.

Schumacher said: "Mercedes is an awesome brand. What they've achieved in F1 is incredible so for sure I'm looking at all options and Mercedes is part of that."



Sargeant earned a superlicence

# RACING NEWS

## TEEN PIERSON EYES UP AN INDYCAR FUTURE

Teenager Josh Pierson has joined the Ed Carpenter Racing IndyCar squad as a development driver and is aiming to join the top-flight USA single-seater series by 2025.

The 16-year-old became the youngest race winner in the World Endurance Championship this season, when he raced for United Autosports in LMP2 and finished third in the standings. He was also the youngest ever starter the 24 Hours of Daytona and at the Le Mans 24 hours.

The Oregon driver began his career in USF1600 and F2000 in 2020 and 2021 before stepping into sportscars.

The racer said: "I'm grateful to have a path to IndyCar with ECR. I've been dreaming about racing in the IndyCar Series for as long as I can remember."

Team boss Ed Carpenter said that the plan was to prepare Pierson before offering him a race seat after a two-year development programme.

"I have truly enjoyed getting to know Josh Pierson and his family," said Carpenter. "For such a young man, he has accomplished so much."



Pierson: Indy 500 target

## WILLIAMS JUNIOR O'SULLIVAN COMMITS TO F3 FOR 2023

Williams junior driver Zak O'Sullivan will switch from Carlin to Prema Racing for his second full season in Formula 3 in 2023.

The 17-year-old was 11th in the standings this term with two podium finishes. The 2021 GB3 title winner will line up alongside Mere junior Paul Aron and Ferrari-backed Dino Beganovic. The British driver has already tested with the team.

He said: "It will be a new environment for me, but Prema's history says all we need to know, so hopefully we can have a good year together. The first impressions in testing were good, and the pace was pretty strong. I was still learning the car as there are a few differences, getting to know all the team and the engineers, and learning some Italian as well..."



O'Sullivan will remain in FIA F3



Porsche 963 to make bow

Photos: Porsche Motorsport, Motorsport Images



Tandy delighted to get onboard

# TANDY REJOINS PORSCHE FOR TOP-FLIGHT SPORTSCAR ATTACK IN 2023

**Le Mans winner makes a comeback to pilot one of the works 963 Hyercars**

By Matt James

### The 2015 Le Mans winner Nick Tandy will return to the Porsche factory team to drive its new 963 Hypercar next season.

The Briton, who was part of the German firm's attack from 2013 until 2020 and won at La Sarthe in the 919 Hybrid LMP1 alongside Earl Bamber and Nico Hulkenberg, will be joined in the works roster by Frederic Makowiecki

as part of the 10-man crew split across campaigns in the World Endurance Championship and IMSA SportsCar Championship in the States. It has yet to be revealed which contest the individual drivers will tackle.

Tandy, 38, is due to drive the car for the first time. He said: "I couldn't be happier or more excited to join Porsche Penske Motorsport for 2023 and feel honoured to race the 963 and be back in the top-classes once again."

"When I heard the names Porsche Motorsport and Team Penske together, it didn't take long once the discussion started to make a decision. Porsche Motorsport gave me the big break in my career and my life."

"We went on to achieve some unbelievable successes together, but that is hopefully just the beginning."

French racer Makowiecki has been one of the test drivers for the 963, which has been developed by the Multimatic firm.

He said: "I was involved from day one, so I've experienced first-hand the huge advances that we've made over the past few months. We've made great progress; that's why I'm looking forward to the first races of the 2023 season."

Other drivers who are on the roster are Felipe Nasr, Dane Cameron, Andre Lotterer, Kevin Estre, Michael Christensen, Laurens Vanthoor, Mathieu Jaminet and Matt Campbell.

British rising star makes another step



## BEARMAN EMBRACES STEP UP TO FORMULA 2 WITH PREMA

Briton Oliver Bearman will step up to Formula 2 next season with the Prema Racing team.

The 17-year-old, an ADAC and Italian F4 title winner raced with the Italian squad this season in Formula 3 and finished third in the points in his maiden campaign with a win at Spa.

The Chelmsford racer, a member of the Ferrari Driver Academy, was due to take part in the end-of-season test in

Abu Dhabi in his new machine. Bearman said: "I'm really excited to continue another year with the Prema family, this time in F2."

"I'm really happy with how my first season went in F3. It was a really nice introduction and I felt like the team coached me throughout the year really well. I will continue to work hard over the winter with the Ferrari Driver Academy, in order to be fully prepared for 2023."

## FIA PROMISES NEW JUNIOR LEVEL SINGLE-SEATER SERIES FOR FEMALES

Formula 1 has officially announced the formation of a new all-women series that will begin in 2023.

The F1 Academy will be run and financially backed by the sport's owners, Formula One Management, with the intent of helping more young women progress in motor racing and ultimately into F1.

The new championship will consist of five teams, each with three drivers run by existing competitors in the F1 feeder series, F2 and F3. The season will be held across seven meetings, with three races at each event. The calendar has yet to be confirmed but is expected to include one F1 weekend. "Everyone should have the opportunity to follow their dreams and achieve their potential and Formula 1 wants to ensure we are doing everything we can to create greater diversity and routes into this incredible sport," said F1's CEO Stefano Domenicali.

Meanwhile, the head of the sport's global governing body, the FIA, Mohammed Ben Sulayem, has said that changes will be made to junior single-seater categories



New all-female series planned

to make them more accessible for females. He said the lack of power steering on cars such as the Formula 2 and Formula 3 chassis gives female racers a disadvantage over their male counterparts. Speaking at a conference last week, Ben Sulayem said that junior formulae chassis builders could be forced to alter their machines. Ben Sulayem said: "We are talking with our departments when it comes to technical [aspects]."

## BRITON STEFAN WILSON FIRMS UP PLANS FOR INDY 500 IN 2023

Briton Stefan Wilson will race at the Indy 500 in 2023 in the Dreyer & Reinbold Racing squad, the same team that ran his late brother Justin in 2010 and 2011.

The 33-year-old will join the squad, which has formed an alliance with Cusick Motorsports, alongside a yet-to-be-named sister driver.

Wilson said: "I've been very impressed with how hard DRR has worked at and focused on the 500. It's such an honour for me to join them in partnership with Cusick Motorsports and work with them on our collective goal of trying to win the Indy 500."

"There's a great opportunity here for

us to all grow together. I hope this leads to more 500s, and maybe even more races together."

Wilson (pictured, right), who led the Indy 500 with four laps to go in 2018 before slipping to 15th at the flag, has contested the showpiece event on four occasions.





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# RACING NEWS

# RAM FORMS BRITISH GT SUPERTEAM FOR GULF 12 HOURS

Reigning champion Loggie and frontrunner Tillbrook combine in all-star Mercedes line-up



RAM recreating D2 classic Merc livery

By Graham Keilloh

Reigning double British GT champion RAM Racing returns to the Gulf 12 Hours with newly crowned driver Ian Loggie and frontrunner Morgan Tillbrook combining in an all-star Mercedes-AMG GT3 line-up.

The Silverstone-based squad makes its second Gulf 12 Hours start in Abu Dhabi on December 11, having first contested the event in January 2021 when Loggie was part of the crew that finished third.

Loggie's fellow British GT Am driver Tillbrook

swaps his usual Enduro McLaren 720S GT3 for the Mercedes; the pair also shared a 2 Seas Mercedes in the previous Gulf 12 Hours earlier this year. The forthcoming line-up is completed by Pro driver Mikael Grenier, who competed in DTM this season and also raced with Loggie during this year's Asian Le Mans Series.

RAM's single Mercedes will also reimagine a classic D2 livery famous from the FIA GT Championship GT1-era CLK GTR of the late 1990s and the CLK DTM of the early 2000s. This follows on from RAM recreating the classic Sonax livery for



Frontrunners Tillbrook and Loggie pair up

its previous Gulf 12 Hours attack.

Loggie said: "We've [Loggie and Tilbrook] been competitors all season in British GT, so I know exactly how quick he is, and I'm really looking forward to working with Mik again. I feel we've got a great chance of a Pro-Am win."

Tillbrook added: "When this chance came up to join RAM Racing I jumped at it. I know they're a top outfit, so I have zero doubts that we'll have a competitive car under us. I really enjoy working with different Pro drivers, so I'm hoping to learn a few things from driving with Mik."

## OPTIMUM EYES BRITISH GT RETURN

British GT champion Optimum Motorsport is assessing a full-season return to the contest next year with McLaren's new Artura GT4 that replaces the 570S from 2023.

Optimum won 2018's GT3 drivers' crown with Flick Haigh and Jonny Adam and last contested the championship full-time in 2020. It's since made sporadic GT3 appearances, and mainly has

raced in international series most notably under the Inception Racing banner with Brendan Iribe. Optimum's final British GT4 campaign was in 2019.

Optimum boss Shaun Goff has confirmed the team has ordered two Arturas for use in several series, including a possible two-car British GT effort.

Goff said: "The new Artura GT4 is an exciting addition to the

fleet and having enjoyed many successful years in British GT, a championship that is very close to my heart, we're really happy to announce our intent to be back next year.

"We were a prominent British GT entrant between 2012 and 2020, and are now looking forward to the prospect of racing on home soil full-time next season with the Artura GT4s."



Champ team set for two McLaren Arturas

## STRONG INTEREST IN HONDA CONTEST

Club Time Attack's newly launched Racing Hondas championship has received strong initial interest with enquiries from more than 50 potential competitors as well as interest from sponsors.

The new contest, for which all Honda models from all eras are eligible, was launched by the club a fortnight ago. The championship will run on the same programme as the Time Attack championship from next season.

And Racing Hondas championship coordinator Simon Slade has told Motorsport News that in the short time since being unveiled, interest in the championship has far surpassed expectations.

Slade told MN: "We've had over 50 enquiries and we're already getting interest from sponsors so very pleased with the initial reaction we've had."

The inaugural round is set to take place at Cadwell Park on April 30-May 1 next year, and there will be 16 races in total across six weekends. Value-for-money, fair competition, close racing and large audiences are promised.

● In last week's MN in our news article on the launch of the Racing Hondas championship we mistakenly stated that the Civic Challenge was formerly run by the British Racing and Sports Car Club. BRSCC never ran this series. MN apologises for this error.



More than 50 competitors have enquired about contest



Chadwicks drove restored car

## CHADWICKS IN GINETTA REUNION

Three-time W Series champion Jamie Chadwick and brother Ollie returned to the driver's seat of their old Ginetta Junior car at Castle Combe last month.

The siblings both launched their racing careers in Ginetta Junior, and Ollie in 2016 became Ginetta GT5 Challenge champion.

In 2020, unbeknown to the siblings, their family and original race engineer Nick Hart relocated the car and restored it. At the end of the year it was presented to Jamie and Ollie as a Christmas gift.

And last month the pair at last got their first chance to drive it, with the car in the same yellow livery as it ran in with them previously.

Jamie said: "I'd forgotten how edgy and analogue these are, but it all came flooding back, and it's really addictive trying to get the best out of it. We're hoping to have a lot more fun in it next year – time permitting."

## MASTERS LAUNCHES LATER-GT CONTEST

Masters Historic Racing has unveiled a new Masters GT Trophy for 'modern-historic' machines from 2007-18 that will join its range of grids from next season.

The new contest – the sixth in the Masters' UK and Europe portfolio – is a 'baby brother' to Masters Endurance Legends, and is for GT4 and one-make Cup, Trophy and Challenge cars from the 2007-18 timeframe.

It has been launched in response to drivers' requests for a series catering for these cars. The one-off Masters GT4 races at this year's Classic at Silverstone, run in association with prolific GT organiser SRO Motorsports, was also a forerunner to the series.

Its class structure is split into 2007-11, 2012-14 and 2015-18 year groups, then further into Corse, Cup and GT4 classes. It has a six-round calendar with three UK events and three in mainland Europe. Races will be run nationally in its first season to negate the need for international race licences.

### CALENDAR

#### Masters GT Trophy 2023

DATE	VENUE/CIRCUIT
April 7-8	Donington
May 27-28	Brands Hatch
June 16-18	Zandvoort
August 25-27	Silverstone
September 27-October 1	Spa
October 27-29	Portimao

# RACING NEWS



Photos: Jakob Ebrey

# DUNNE MOVES TO GB3 FOR '23 WITH HITECH

**Reigning British Formula 4 champion stays with team for GB3 graduation**

By Graham Keilloh

**Record-breaking reigning British Formula 4 champion Alex Dunne will race in the GB3 championship next year remaining with the double title-winning Hitech GP team.**

The 17-year-old Irishman with Hitech took a crushing 2022 British F4 title, claiming a record

11 race wins despite missing the finale Brands Hatch triple-header with clashing commitments.

He has been nominated both for Motorsport News's 2022 racing driver of the year award and its rising star of the year award – both winners will be announced in next week's MN – and looks an early favourite for next year's GB3 title.

His GB3 move was confirmed as

MN closed for press last week.

Dunne also this year contested the Italian F4 championship and finished as runner-up in the standings. Prolific junior single-seater squad Hitech meanwhile in GB3 this season took Luke Browning to the drivers' title plus it won the teams' crown.

Dunne said: "The main reason GB3 was such a good option was not only being able to stay with Hitech, but

because the car has quite a lot of downforce, so it's a lot more comparable to FIA F3 cars than Formula Regional would be for example."

Hitech's GB3 team manager Phil Blow added: "We tested with him at Snetterton a few weeks ago and he made steady progress throughout the day – he went nearly a second quicker than the pole time for that year."

## BRITISH F4 STARS IN F1 SUPPORT

British Formula 4 drivers and teams dominated the F4 UAE Trophy race line-up supporting last weekend's Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix at the Yas Marina circuit.

Two non-championship races supported the F1 event, and reigning British Formula 4 champion Alex Dunne headed a four-car Hitech GP line-up. Dunne was joined by Hitech's three 2023 British F4 recruits: Ginetta Junior graduate pair Will Macintyre and Kanato Le

plus Australian Formula Ford graduate James Piszczyk.

Carlin fielded New Zealander Louis Sharp who finished fourth in this year's British F4 standings despite missing the opening round because it was before his 15th birthday. Eleven cars in total entered the event.

Isaac Barashi meanwhile is the ninth driver confirmed for 2023's British F4 line-up, as the 17-year-old Israeli remains with Argenti next season after entering the final two events

of 2022 with the squad at Silverstone and Brands Hatch GP.

Barashi said: "Taking part in the last two races of the 2022 season has helped me gain confidence and an understanding as to what happens on a race weekend.

"Heading into the 2023 season my goal is to stay consistent and score points in every round, I want to be fighting for the championship title."



Sharp was one of strong contingent



Harvey and Armstrong got test

## SCORPIO EYES GB4 RETURN AFTER 2022 SAMPLE

Scorpio Motorsport is working on a fuller return to single-seater racing in 2023 in the GB4 championship.

The twice Formula Renault champion team operated Rossoverde Racing's part-time Christian Lester GB4 entry this year, then as Scorpio ran Aqil Alibhai in Donington Park's season finale.

Scorpio boss Jon Pettitt told Motorsport News: "It's great to get

back with single-seaters. There was a little spell where I was a bit unsure where the single-seater scene was going, so we moved across to sportscars with Radical which was nice and refreshing.

"But we dipped our toes in again this year with Christian Lester, and it's reignited the passion for single-seaters. They're [GB3 and GB4] great cars which is where it went wrong a

little bit in single-seaters. We're working really hard on putting together a package for next year so the team can be more involved with the GB4. Things are looking good."

Scorpio last week held a prize GB4 test at Bedford Autodrome for Ultimate Karting champions Louis Harvey and Daniel Armstrong.

● Louis Harvey writes exclusively for MN about his GB4 test on p34.

## SCHOLARSHIP WINNER MARTINS MEETS LEWIS

**Team Brazil Scholarship winner Wallace Martins got to meet Lewis Hamilton on Brazilian TV during the recent Brazilian Grand Prix event in a surprise set up by channel TV Globo.**

Martins raced in last month's Formula Ford Festival with the Swift Cooper team, his prize from winning the inaugural scholarship, and finished 13th in the final.

Martins is nicknamed 'The Hamilton of Brazil' so after his Festival appearance TV Globo had the idea to get Hamilton and Martins to meet. Martins thought he was

just being picked up to be interviewed by the channel, but when the car arrived Hamilton was in the front seat.

The seven-time Formula 1 World champion also invited Martins to watch the grand prix and Martins also got onto the grid.

Martins said: "For me it was fantastic to be able to meet Hamilton in person. He's a fantastic guy, we talked a little about the difficulty of getting into motorsport, and what it's like to be an athlete in Brazil.

"I have no words to describe the emotion it was to be able to talk to him. It was amazing."



Scholarship winner got big surprise



US racer steps from Formula Ford to GB4

## FAIRBAIRN JOINS CHAMPION KMR IN GB4

**American teenager Jeremy Fairbairn will race with inaugural GB4 teams' champion Kevin Mills Racing in the junior single-seater championship in 2023.**

The 18-year-old raced with KMR in this year's Formula Ford Festival, finishing ninth in the final.

He has considerable experience across American categories and now is set for his first full European racing campaign.

Fairbairn said: "I love racing in the USA, but I feel like the opportunity for me to gain experience on new tracks and against this

level of competition is a dream come true. I can't wait to see where it takes me.

"I watched every [GB4 2022] race, and I was impressed not only by the management of the weekends, but also the quality of the driving, not to mention the races take place at some of the most iconic tracks in the UK, which I am dying to drive."

Team boss Kevin Mills added: "We were not only impressed by his speed at this year's Formula Ford Festival, but also his ability to adapt to a new car."

# RALLY NEWS



Tanak could return to M-Sport should wage demands be met



Breen will be making a splash elsewhere

Photos: M-Sport, Red Bull Content Pool

# BREEN'S M-SPORT EXIT OPENS THE DOOR TO TANAK

**British team the only option for Estonian if he commits to another WRC season**

By Graham Lister

**Craig Breen's return to Hyundai has paved the way for Ott Tanak to move in the opposite direction and give M-Sport the team leader it craves.**

Last month (October 27), Motorsport News reported speculation surfacing on Rally Spain that Breen and Tanak would be trading places for 2023.

With Breen now confirmed as a Hyundai recruit for next season during a flurry of driver line-up announcements last week, M-Sport appears to be without a podium finisher in its full-time ranks. Re-signing Tanak could therefore be the difference

between success or failure for the Ford-powered team, meaning a move for the Estonian could be potentially pivotal.

Tanak quit Hyundai one season earlier than expected to "embark on a new challenge" and a return to M-Sport, for whom he first drove in 2011 and scored his maiden World championship win with six years later, ticks several boxes.

Even if nine-time champion Sébastien Loeb undertakes a limited schedule of events with M-Sport again in 2023, Tanak would receive number one status, while the family feel factor the Cumbrian outfit is famous for would also appeal. Unlike Hyundai, M-Sport operates below the big promotional radar, which would also sit comfortably

with the publicity-shy Tanak.

However, while Tanak would be right for M-Sport – providing it could find the millions to pay his wages – a team that is quick to concede it doesn't have the cash to fight tooth and nail with big guns Hyundai and Toyota might not be right for Tanak.

Asked about the likelihood of him committing to a full season in 2023, Tanak said on Rally Japan recently that "it depends how I feel. Whatever I'm going to do next year, it [has to give] me a chance to fight for the championship and you know this probably has been something that I've been missing to be able to fight for the championship. We will find out if this opportunity

comes or not. Honestly, I can say I have nothing at the moment."

If Tanak commits to another full season in 2023, M-Sport offers the only vacancy after Hyundai and Toyota filled their line-ups (see separate story).

For M-Sport, alternatives of the calibre close to Tanak's are in short supply with Kris Meeke, Andreas Mikkelsen and Hayden Paddon the only recent WRC event winners not known to be in gainful employment.

Meanwhile, although its young trio of Adrien Fourmaux, Gus Greensmith and Pierre-Louis Loubet have shown potential, none have demonstrated the "consistency to lead the team into 2023", a prerequisite for M-Sport's Malcolm Wilson (see sidebar).

**MN SAYS...**

While following the full schedule with M-Sport this year gave Breen the opportunity he'd always yearned for, his 2022 season was proof that too much can be a bad thing.

Breen's epic Hyundai cameos in 2021 – he landed three podium finishes out of five WRC starts – owed plenty to his ability and adaptability.

But the drawn-out schedule gave he and former co-driver Paul Nagle the opportunity to prepare properly.

However, competing more frequently did not and the huge pressure Breen would put on himself to perform was simply too much.

The chance to return to Hyundai for a season of car-sharing with

Dani Sordo where the team leader job is somebody else's problem maybe more Breen's thing.

Going part time could be considered two steps back but it could be what the under-achieving Irish talent needs to do what he's capable of doing.

Graham Lister

## WILSON NOT CONVINCED BREEN COULD LEAD M-SPORT

Craig Breen won't be an M-Sport driver next year because he hadn't done enough to convince team founder Malcolm Wilson of his worth.

Breen joined M-Sport for the 2022 season on a two-year deal and impressed with third place on the Monte Carlo Rally in January.

But his campaign quickly unravelled with a podium in Sardinia the only big high during a season full of car-crashing lows.

"Craig delivered some solid results, but the consistency wasn't there to lead the team into 2023," said Wilson.

"I am proud of the role M-Sport had in making him the driver he is today and we had hoped to see him secure

his first WRC victory with a Ford. Sadly, that wasn't to be, but I wish him every success for the future."

M-Sport team chief Richard Millener said: "Craig is very talented and has more to achieve in his career, but we need a new approach for 2023 and we turn our attentions towards securing a competitive line-up."

Breen, 32, said: "It has been an important season as my first full-time drive and to complete that in a Puma has been fantastic. M-Sport has a real family feel and it will be sad to leave that behind. It has been a great experience for me to be part of the team, but it's time to move on."

## LATVALA WANTED TO KEEP HYUNDAI RECRUIT LAPPI

Jari-Matti Latvala has revealed he wanted Esapekka Lappi to remain a Toyota driver for 2023 after his fellow Finn made the switch to Hyundai last week.

Lappi left Toyota for a second time – he previously quit to join Citroen for the 2019 season – to take over from Ott Tanak as Thierry Neuville's permanent team-mate, with Craig Breen replacing Oliver Solberg to share the third i20 N with Dani Sordo.

"When we started to negotiate about 2023 our target was to continue with the same drivers," said Toyota team chief Latvala. "But when Ott left Hyundai, Hyundai needed a driver and was offering him a full season, we could offer him half a season and, in our position, we couldn't compete with that."

Lappi carshared with Sébastien Ogier in 2022 but that job will now go to Toyota's Japanese development driver Takamoto

Katsuta with both drivers tackling seven events in the third factory Yaris alongside Elfyn Evans and World champion Kalle Rovanpera.

Katsuta, who will continue to be co-driven by Irishman Aaron Johnston, will revert to the fourth semi-works Yaris on the events Ogier tackles, including January's Monte Carlo Rally.

Toyota is considering hiring out its fourth Yaris on seven rounds.



Lappi will jump ship to the Hyundai team for a full 2023 campaign

## RALLY NEWS

# M-SPORT CONFIRMS CONTINUATION OF FIESTA SUPPLY FOR THE FUTURE

Production axe does not mean the end of Ford's rally machines on the UK stages

By Paul Lawrence

**Although the Ford Fiesta will cease production next year, M-Sport has confirmed that it will continue supplying rally developed versions of the model for years to come.**

News that production of the Fiesta road car is to end caused some concern across the sport about the future supply of cars, but M-Sport confirmed that plans are already in place to keep the Fiesta at the forefront of rallying for the foreseeable future.

M-Sport has been aware for some time that the Fiesta was coming to the end of its life as a road car. But with the co-operation and support of Ford, M-Sport has increased its stock of Fiesta bodyshells to ensure production will continue across all rally

models for years to come, both in the UK and in Poland.

The Fiesta is the backbone of M-Sport's customer rallying programme, representing 80% of the cars it builds and is the only model in the sport with a car offered to meet Rally2, Rally3 and Rally4 regulations.

M-Sport boss Malcolm Wilson said: "The Fiesta is a core part of M-Sport's business activities. We were able to begin preparing for the end of the Fiestas production run well ahead of time. I would like to assure all of our customers that we will still be building Fiesta rally cars for years to come, both in the UK and in Poland. Development is underway across the board with our Fiesta based cars with Rally2, Rally3 and Rally4 models enjoying thorough development programmes."



Photos: Ben Lawrence, Jakob Ebrey

The Fiesta will be around for a while...



Patrick O'Brien: recent runner-up



Kyle McBride is nominated



Hopes: British Rally Championship Junior winner Eamonn Kelly

## FINALISTS CONFIRMED FOR BIG MONEY AWARD



Eamonn Kelly has a prize shot

Motorsport Ireland has confirmed the three drivers that are in the running to win this year's Billy Coleman Award, which will be announced on December 7.

Returning for the first time since 2019 due to the Covid pandemic, the coveted prize carries a value of 100,000 Euros plus additional support.

A total of seven nominees attended an interview with judges in Dublin and Patrick O'Brien, Kyle McBride and Eamonn Kelly progressed to the final round.

O'Brien – twice a runner-up in 2015 and 2016 – is considered most people's

favourite, given his success in this year's Irish Forestry Championship after making the switch to an R5 car.

Meanwhile, Kelly – the son of Irish Tarmac champion Donagh – clinched the Junior British Rally Championship title this season while McBride won the Academy Trophy in the same competition.

Aiden Harper, president of Motorsport Ireland, said: "All the nominees for the Billy Coleman Award were of an outstanding calibre this year and Eamonn, Patrick and Kyle are thoroughly deserving finalists."

"Importantly, all seven nominees will get the opportunity to further develop their talent as part of the Motorsport Ireland Rally Academy, which bodes well for the future of Irish rallying on domestic and international fronts."

Harper paid tribute to Sean McHugh and John Coyne for their work on developing the Academy, adding: "It is a fantastic platform for young drivers to aim for."

Previous award winners include four-time British Rally Championship title-winner Keith Cronin and WRC contender Craig Breen.

### OBITUARY

#### John Brown 1939-2022

Motorsport News was saddened to learn of the death of John Brown at the age of 83.

Brown was one of the most forward thinking and influential rally organisers of his generation, as well as being a very accomplished co-driver. His enduring legacy was to be the founder of HÉRO and the originator of Le-Jog.

He graduated from university and became rallying editor at Motoring News. He also co-drove Erik Carlsson to victory on the 1961 RAC Rally in a Saab 96. At the time, Brown was still just 22 years and eight months old and set a mark as the youngest person to win the event.

In 1968, he took the first of two British Rally Championship titles alongside Colin Malkin in a Hillman Imp. Nearly a decade later, he won the co-drivers' title again, competing alongside regular partner Russell Brookes.

Brown had a remarkable CV in event organisation and was later heavily involved in historic and classic rallying. He created the Land's End to John O'Groats Classic Reliability Trial, which led to his forming the Historic Endurance Rally Organisation in 1996.

## RALLYING RETURNS TO CROFT CIRCUIT

After three years, rallying will return to the Croft circuit in North Yorkshire on Sunday for the Winter Stages Rally.

A near-capacity entry of 90 cars will be headed by Frank Bird (Ford Fiesta Rally2) who will aim to repeat his win from the last time Croft was used in 2019. Eight-time winner Kevin Proctor (Ford Fiesta S2000) leads the opposition along with David Henderson in his Fiesta Rally2. Joe Cunningham from the Proctor stable is another leading contender in his Fiesta R5.

The local Constantine family will run four cars. Brothers Mark and Andrew will be contenders for a class victory in their Vauxhall Corsa, while Mark's sons Tom and Luke will make their rallying debuts in a pair of MG3s. Andrew's twin sons James and Oliver will share a Suzuki Swift and Mark and Andrew's sister Nicky is one of the senior officials.

Spectators are welcome at the venue, where the first stage will start at 0900hrs.



Bird will gun for Croft victory

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# RALLY NEWS

## RETSON EAGER TO TRY RALLY2 ON GRAVEL

Finlay Retson is keen to try the Ford Fiesta Rally2 on gravel off the back of his maiden senior rally victory on the recent Kingdom Stages at Crail.

It was the 22-year-old's second Rally2 outing following his debut at the McRae Rally Challenge in Knockhill, and it's left him wanting more.

Retson told MN: "That's where I want to go is back in the forest again, and hopefully in that car, but it's a massive step up in money! We just need to go away and try and raise some money over the winter and see what we can do.

"Ideally I'd like to be back in that Rally2 car because they're just so much fun to drive and I feel like there's so much more I can put into the car in terms of my own driving," he added. "Yeah I won but I didn't feel it was on the limit, so I'd like to have a good proper go, especially on the gravel, to see what I can do."

Kilty made a stage comeback



## FISHER BACKS CONTROL FUEL IN IRISH TARMAC CHAMPIONSHIP

Leading contender Alastair Fisher says he welcomes the move by the Irish Tarmac Championship to introduce a control fuel from next season.

Fisher – who has two victories to his name in the cross-border competition – believes it will help to close up the competition and lead to more exciting battles.

Fisher said: "It is certainly something that I am in support of. It is another step towards ensuring that we are competing on as level a playing field as possible against each other."

Championship manager Paddy Flanagan has labelled the move a major step forward that aligns it with other series in Europe, including the British Rally Championship.

### ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

## PROCTERS GO FOURTH TO TAKE THE FLAG ON THE SALTIRE CLASSIC CLASH

There was a tight fight for the win on the Saltire Classic Targa, with Ali and Lynsey Procter beating Michael Reid/John Lindsay by eight seconds. It was the winning driver's fourth victory on the event, the previous three having been as a navigator.

The organisers had found four new test venues and had included a 12-mile regularity

in the Errachty Forest. Procter/Procter were quickest on the tests, which allowed them to take first place, as Reid/Lindsay put in the best performance on the regularity sections. Ben Blanchard/Bob Hargreaves were only four seconds behind on the regularities but had to stop on one test and replace a broken throttle cable. This dropped them to 11th place.

Steve Cotton/Niall Frost took a clear win on the Primrose Trophy, finishing almost two minutes clear of the field. Top seeds Richard Hunter/Gary Evans had been in the battle for the win but lost eight minutes after putting their Escort into a hedge on the penultimate section. Jon Bossen/Ron Bryn Jones led initially but fell back to sixth at the Finish.

The results remained provisional for seven days after the rally; the well-received event format had no finish venue and ended at the last competitive control.

Ian Mills

**Results**  
Saltire Classic Targa  
Organiser: Saltire Rally Club  
When: November 12  
Where: Perthshire  
Championships: NESCR  
Route: 100 miles (16 tests and 3 regularities)  
Starters: 44

When: November 12-13  
Where: Lancashire and North Yorkshire  
Championships: EMAC, ANCC & ANWCC  
Route: 87 miles  
Starters: 39  
1 Steve Cotton/Niall Frost (Subaru Impreza RS) 7m00s; 2 John Gornall/Martin Gornall (Peugeot 206 GTi) +1m52s; 3 Myles Greaves/James Chaplin (Peugeot 205 GTi); 4 Sam Collis/Sam Spencer (BMW 318i); 5 Tony Harrison/Philip Savage (Proton Persona); 6 Jon Bossen/Ron Bryn Jones (Ford Escort); 7 Richard Thompson/Roger Evans (Suzuki Swift Sport); 8 Zak Hughes/Macaulay Bridgewater (Peugeot 206); 9 Sam Coombes/Matt Walsh (Rover 200); 10 Richard Hunter/Cary Evans (Ford Escort).  
**Class winners:** James Durkin/Peter Scott (Ford Fiesta ST150); Coombes/Walsh.



Fisher is backing the move to a single fuel in Ireland

## KILTY ENDSEIGHT-YEAR BREAK FROM RALLYING

British Sprint champion and EuroBOSS single-seater racer Roger Kilty ended an eight-year break from rallying when he drove a Mitsubishi Lancer E10 on the recent Malton Forest Rally.

Yorkshireman Kilty completed seven seasons of historic stage rallying, first

in a Vauxhall Chevette HSR and then in a Ford Escort Mk2. His last rally was the 2014 Circuit of Ireland until his return 10 days ago. Just as before, he was co-driven on the Malton event by his partner Lynette Banks.

Kilty, after finishing 31st overall after a learning day,

said: "It just felt that it was the right time to go rallying again and I fancied something different. It was my first time in a modern car too, and I had only driven it around a stubble field before starting the rally. It took a bit of getting used to as well."

No firm plans are yet in place for what they will do next.

## NO WARCOP STAGES EVENT IN 2023

The Warcop Stages rally will not run at Easter 2023 as initially planned.

North Humbershire Motor Club has confirmed that it will not be able to run the Warcop Stages next year as the military training area will not be available.

The event last ran in 2019 and was lost in 2020 and '21 due to the pandemic.

Then the 2022 event did not run due to the loss of a key member of the organising team.

A spokesman for NHMC said: "We shall not be running in 2023 either, but we remain hopeful that the event will be back in 2024."

The Warcop training area offers popular asphalt stages in the West Pennine region.



Woodpecker has been shuffled back

CALENDAR	
DATE	VENUE
March 11	Malcolm Wilson Rally
April 15	Rallynauts Stages
May 6	Border Counties Rally
June 17	Kielder Forest Rally
July 8	Nicky Grist Stages
September 9	Woodpecker Stages
September 23	Trackrod Forest Stages
October 28	Cambrian Rally

of which is that the Rally First cars are now permitted to use limited-slip differentials.

Neil Cross from the BTRDA said: "We're delighted to present the 2023 calendar, returning to the events that competitors enjoyed so much this year.

"We've listened to our competitors and have tweaked our class eligibility. New for 2023 is the introduction of limited-slip diffs in Rally First, a change that we hope will bring some more cars out in that class."

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# SPORTING SCENE NEWS

## BRISSCA F2 ROUND-UP

### Marshall makes it a Gala evening



Marshall enforced the law with win

The BriSCA Formula 2 season concluded with a large entry contesting the annual Gala Night at Skegness, where Kelvyn Marshall took the honours.

The championship race was gridded in reverse national points order, irrespective of grades, and was led initially by Gary Wrench. After an early caution period, he was overtaken by Adam Rubery, who had made rapid early progress. Either side of another caution, Rubery was tracked by Marshall, the 2015 World champion benefiting from a favourable grid position having raced infrequently this year.

The lead duo opened a gap to the chasing pack and Marshall moved ahead before half-distance. But as they battled through traffic, Chris Burgoyne and Billy Webster dragged

themselves into contention. They each passed Rubery, who gradually slipped further back, before Webster shoved Burgoyne wide to take second.

Webster could make little impression on the lead over the remaining laps so Marshall repeated his Skegness success of a fortnight earlier to claim the red-and-white chequered roof. Behind Webster, Burgoyne and Jack Cave, track specialist David Shearing pipped Rubery for fifth, while World champion Dave Polley recovered to seventh after an early spin. Dutchman Chris Hendriks was the leading overseas driver in eighth.

#### Mark Paulson

**Results** **Organiser:** Skegness Raceway **When:** November 19 **Where:** Skegness Raceway **Starters:** 57 **1 Kelvyn Marshall; 2 Billy Webster; 3 Chris Burgoyne; 4 Jack Cave; 5 David Shearing; 6 Adam Rubery; 7 Dave Polley; 8 Chris Hendriks; 9 Jamie Jones; 10 Xander van Wijlick.**

## EXTRA DELTA FOR WORLD RX IN 2023

French rallycross and Dakar team GCK Motorsport is working on plans to field a two-car effort in the World Rallycross Championship next season.

The Guerlain Chicherit-owned squad returned to World RX for the final round of the 2022 season at the Nurburgring in Germany earlier this month and impressed with the pace of its brand-new all-electric Lancia Delta EVO-e.

While the retro-look car didn't get the result it had the pace to achieve, due to contact on the opening day

and a mistake by Chicherit in the semi-finals, the performance of the new car has inspired the team's owner to target running two.

"The Delta EVO-e is a magnificent machine," said Chicherit. "Never in my 20-year career had I been so impatient to get behind the wheel. The overall conclusions from the race in Germany were extremely satisfactory as we were able to match the speed of our rivals who've already raced in nine races with these new-generation electric cars. Next year we'll be back with two cars."



Delta force: another Lancia is due

began to hunt down the race leader. At the halfway point, Speak barged his way into second with Tom Harris moving into third. However, Catherine Harris punted them both wide on the next turn to reclaim second.

Entering the closing stages Tom Harris managed to barge his way into the lead. On the final turn Catherine Harris tried to wrestle second from Hall-Morton but spun out of contention, which allowed Speak to claim third.

Winner Tom Harris said: "To be honest I thought I was in second as I had not seen Barnicoat spin out, I was driving the wheels off it to try

and catch him. But I just couldn't. I was surprised when he didn't pull up in victory lane, if I had known he was a lap down I could have had a relaxing drive."

Runner-up Hall-Morton said: "It's a bit unreal to be on the podium with Harris and Speak, they been there and won it all. Fair play to Catherine Harris for giving a go on the last bend, I am just glad my car is in one piece. Thanks to my team for all the hours they put in, a result like this makes it all worthwhile."

Earlier in the evening, Callum Thornton claimed the Under 25s championship in his first year of racing when long time race

leader Tyrone Evans suffered a puncture with two laps to go. The winner said: "I blew a diff in practice, but Tom Harris lent me a spare one and his team helped me get out for the race. A big thank you to them."

**Results** **Organiser:** BriSCA Management Board, BriSCA F1 **Where:** Skegness **When:** November 19 **Starters:** 46 **1 Tom Harris; 2 James Hall-Morton; 3 Rob Speak; 4 Karl Hawkins-Wainman; 5 Mat Newson; 6 Frankie Wainman Junior Jr; 7 Catherine Harris; 8 Lewis Evans; 9 Jansen Wilkinson; 10 Ben Barnicoat. **Under 25s Championship:** 1 Calum Thornton; 2 Kyle Gray; 3 Liam Gilbank; 4 James Hall-Morton; 5 Jordan Falding; 6 Courtney Finnigan; 7 Finn Sargent; 8 Eddie Collins; 9 Lewis Evans; 10 Louis Goodwin**

## BRISSCA F1: SKEGNESS RACEWAY BY COLIN CASSERLEY

## HARRIS KEEPS UP HIS WINNING HABIT IN LINCOLNSHIRE

**Tom Harris has a liking for Skegness Raceway. On Saturday night he won his fourth Skegness final win of the year and his 16th at the Lincolnshire venue. His first came back in July 2010.**

Harris, who has a total of 73 career final wins, has won more at Skegness than any other track on the BriSCA F1 schedule.

James Hall-Morton led into the first turn while behind him, several spinning cars, including pre-race favourite Ben Barnicoat, created a tyre smoke screen.

Catherine Harris, Rob Speak and Tom Harris managed to negotiate their way through the mayhem and

## BTCC MEN TARGET FULL BriSCA F1 OUTINGS AFTER SKEGNESS SHOWDOWN

### Parfitt and Collard want to tackle a headline meeting in the future

Photos: Andros Trophy, Colin Casserley, Ant Jenkins



Parfitt was thrilled with his pace in Mark Sargent's machine

By Matt James

Touring car stars Ricky Collard and Rick Parfitt are planning to enter a full BriSCA F1 race meeting after sampling the machines in a standalone showdown race last weekend.

Ten tin-top stars went to Skegness Raceway last weekend for a BTCC showpiece event. They shared the track together and used borrowed cars, but Parfitt and Collard have both set their sights on a full meeting in the future.

Infiniti Q50 BTCC driver Parfitt, who drove the machine regularly used by Mark Sargent, said: "I am genuinely buzzing, and I have already said I will come and to the

main meeting next season. I want to come and do a couple of days' testing and I want to do a proper full-on meeting. I am not brave enough for shale, but I would come back here: why not?"

Collard was in Jason Cull's car and was in contention for the win until he was bumped out of the lead by Bobby Thompson.

"The cars were fantastic, such good fun. I want to come back and have another go in a full meeting," said Collard. "These machines are mental and the racing is a case of getting stuck in. With more time in the car, I would certainly enter a meeting in the future."

● For a full report of the event, see pages 30-31



Muller and Ehrlacher (right)

## BRITISH RX RESULTS FIRMED UP AFTER ROUND AXE

Following a stewards' review, results from the final weekend of the British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy have been confirmed.

With the final day of the season at Lydden Hill on November 6 called off due to adverse wet weather, results were drawn from the Intermediate Classification in all categories and points awarded accordingly, with the exception of Retro Rallycross and Supercar.

The decision means that BMW M3 driver Slawomir Woloch claimed a maiden victory in the Supernational division, while wins for Max Weatherly and Max Langmaid in the Swift Sport and Junior RX categories respectively were enough for each driver to secure the single-specification crowns.

However, because the Supercar class had completed a full points' scoring round the previous day, with Patrick

O'Donovan already declared as champion, the final points were drawn from that penultimate round.

Meanwhile, the finale of the Retro Rallycross Championship was declared null and void because only one heat at the Lydden Hill event had been completed. With Retro sub-class titles already decided, Toyota MR2 driver Tony Lynch was confirmed the overall Retro RX champion on countback.

NOVEMBER 19



Tom Harris was simply unstoppable on Saturday

# HISTORICS

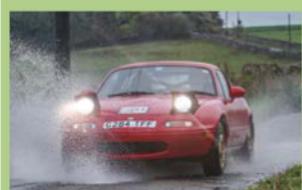
## DOWN THE PUB

### DAN AND NICK DARKIN

Son-and-father rallying combo

**Ages:** 30 and 55

**Hometown:** Bridgnorth



Darkins love their Mazda MX-5

### They are new to historic road rallying

Dan Darkin: "Our first event was the Tour of Cheshire earlier this year, which opened our eyes to the format of historic road rallies. We then managed to finish in the top 10 of our next three events and most recently finished fourth overall on the Dansport Historic Rally in Derbyshire, a round of the MN HRCR championship."

### They chose an MX-5

"While marshalling on an HRCR event, we said it looked like a great laugh, and we had to have a go. We just needed an eligible car. The inclusion of category 4B into historic road rallies made early Mazda MX-5s eligible. We knew of a very low-mileage 1990 MX-5, which has been dry-stored all its life and was only five miles from home. The car is bog standard and we have only added a sump guard, rollbar and Ralitripp."

### They have experience

Nick started navigating on road rallies in the mid-1980s, picking up a couple of Welsh Road Rally Championship titles on the way. Dan started navigating at the age of 12 before switching to the driving seat at 17. He mainly competed on road and navigational rallies but also Autosolos, in which he won the BTRDA Autosolo Challenge twice.

### They are keen to do more

Dan Darkin: "We like to try different events in new areas, so we definitely plan to do more MN HRCR road rallies in 2023 along with a few night road rallies and autotests. We have competed on road rallies for many years and enjoy any event that uses an OS map, so we thought we'd try historic road rallying as it looked great fun. We work well together as a team and usually know what the other is thinking, but we're always having a laugh."

### The MX-5 is cost effective

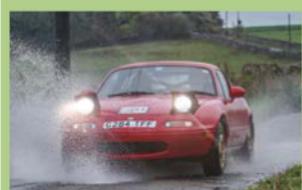
"It's a fairly standard Mazda, so the running costs are just the usual routine maintenance like any competition car, plus we give a life for the more vulnerable parts. The downside of the MX-5 is the lack of ground clearance which can make it quite exciting on the rough tests. Away from motorsport, we go mountain biking and the whole family enjoys walking and the outdoor life."

## DAN AND NICK DARKIN

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# FIVE DAYS OF RALLYING FOR 2023 ROGER ALBERT CLARK RALLY

**Beefed-up challenge for end-of-season rallying showpiece next season**

Photos: Paul and Ben Lawrence

By Paul Lawrence

Five full days of rallying and over 325 special stage miles are the headline numbers for next year's Roger Albert Clark Rally.

With exactly one year to go until the 2023 event, rally manager Colin Heppenstall revealed his outline plan to Motorsport News as organisation for the epic forest rally steps up a gear.

Although final route details are not yet ready to be announced, it is likely that the event will start in the south and then move north with a transport section provisionally set for Friday evening. The rally will start on the morning of Thursday, November 23 for a full day of rallying and that will continue with a full day of stages each day right through until Monday.



Event documentation and scrutineering will be held on Wednesday November 22 and the rally will finish on the afternoon of Monday November 27.

The entry list will open early in 2023 for a maximum of

150 historic and two-wheel-drive rally cars.

Heppenstall told MN: "After scrutineering on Wednesday, we're planning that each of the five days will be a full day of rallying although I do intend to finish the days a little bit

earlier than before. The target is to run between 325 and 350 stage miles and we are working on more detailed route planning. What we will do is run some stages only once, notably those that are less able to withstand the passage of rally cars."



Nagle (l) and Breen (r) to be reunited

## BREEN AND NAGLE TEAM UP AGAIN FOR KILLARNEY

World Rally Championship contender Craig Breen has coaxed Paul Nagle out of retirement for next month's Killarney Historic Rally.

The 2021 event winners will drive the Ford Sierra Cosworth that Frank Meagher took to victory on the 1992 Circuit of Ireland Rally.

The late Tipperary driver was Breen's childhood rally hero and he recently completed a full restoration of the Sierra. Killarney will be the car's first competitive

appearance since the restoration.

"We are looking forward to going out for a big battle with some local drivers," said Nagle, who recently ended his WRC career after eight full campaigns with first Kris Meeke and then Breen.

Breen's father Ray will also contest the event in an historic-spec Subaru Legacy. Killarney and District Motor Club confirmed at a recent rally launch that it had received 230 entries for the 150 available spaces on the December 3 rally.



HERO battlers will have a busy programme

## HERO SETS OUT ITS THREE-YEAR EVENTS PLAN

Prolific historic rally organiser HERO-ERA has confirmed an impressive three-year schedule of nearly 40 events covering 2023 through to 2025.

The Peking-to-Paris Motor Challenge will move back a year and run in June and July 2025 and a new event called the Badawi Trail will run in October next year across the Middle East, including Saudi

Arabia. Also new for early 2025 is a new 20-day adventure through India called the Pearl of India.

As well as the overseas adventures to some remarkable locations, events in the UK will continue, including The Flying Scotsman, the Rally of the Tests, LÉJOG and the popular one-day HERO Challenges.

## THREE-HOUR PRE '66 GT RACE FOR SNETTERTON

The Historic Sports Car Club will reintroduce an endurance race into its schedule by running a three-hour pre '66 GT race at Snetterton next April.

Recreating the former Autosport Three Hour, the endurance race will run on the Snetterton 200 circuit on April 23 for all pre '66 GT cars.

The club is keen to welcome competitors

who want to tackle this one-off race and cars from a wide range of race series will all be eligible.

Andy Dee-Crowne of the HSCC said: "We've been looking to bring this race back onto the schedule in tribute to the original Autosport Three Hours, and we felt that this was a good time to relaunch it at our annual Snetterton meeting."



GT cars will be welcomed at the reincarnated HSCC showdown

## IN BRIEF

### Sue Baker

MN was sad to learn of the death of former Top Gear TV presenter Sue Baker at the age of 67. She died after suffering with motor neurone disease. Baker was best known to rally fans for fronting the BBC TV coverage of the Lombard RAC Rally in the 1980s when she worked with fellow presenters Tony Mason and William Woollard.

### Cullen on stage

Experienced historic racing driver Michael Cullen will compete on next month's Killarney Historic Rally in a BMW M3 E30. His co-driver Sean Hassett is better known for the social media work he does for Craig Breen in the WRC. Other rapid M3s will be driven by Irish asphalt ace Donagh Kelly and Welshman Gareth Lloyd, both fathers of 2022 Junior British Rally Championship contenders.

### Welsh wizards

Mike Simpson and Dale Gibbons have been confirmed as Welsh Historic Rally champions after the final round, the Cambrian Rally at the end of October. Only five drivers contested three or more of the season's eight rounds and Simpson was champion after a fourth maximum score on the Wyedean Stages. Plans for the 2023 season are unclear.

### Karaskas steps up

Veteran racer Dave Karaskas has acquired a 1985 Group C2 Harrier LR4 for his 50th season of racing. Karaskas now has the ex-Richard Lenik car previously rebuilt by the Hepworth team. In period, it was raced in Thundersports and British C2 and Karaskas has an ambition to take the car to Le Mans. The first job is to install a 5.7-litre Chevrolet engine as used in period.

### Manx tales

The Diamond Jubilee of the Manx Trophy Rally, first run in 1963, will be marked by the HERO Three Legs of Mann, which will run on March 17-18. A number of closed-road special tests are planned as well as tests on Jurby airfield and night navigational sections. Around 50 entries have already been taken. The Friday night leg will also be a round of the Isle of Man Night Rally Championship.

### UK Masters dates

Masters Historic Racing will again have three major UK dates in its pan-European schedule next year. After a test day at Donington Park in March, the season will open at Donington on Good Friday and Easter Saturday. The Brands Hatch GP meeting will be on May 27-28 and Masters grids will also feature prominently at the Classic, Silverstone (August 25-27). The rest of the Masters calendar is made of European dates.

### Showtime

Race Retro, the historic motorsport show, will return in 2023, running from February 24-26 at Stoneleigh Park near Coventry. The event has not run since 2020 due to Covid and venue issues. As before on Saturday and Sunday there will be a live rally stage running in a course set up in the venue car parks.



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# COLUMNIST

# MATT JAMES



*The MN editor hopes that the passage of time will be kind to Sebastian Vettel*

**A**t the French Grand Prix in mid-July, four-time Formula 1 World champion Sebastian Vettel was giving hints that he was on the verge of inking a new deal to remain with the Aston Martin Formula 1 team for a third season and beyond.

Seven days later in the build-up to the Hungarian Grand Prix, he dropped the bombshell that he was retiring from the sport for good in a move which nobody had seen coming. And now the curtain has finally come down on an almost 300-race career.

Vettel is a contradiction, and nowhere was this more evident than when he went on the BBC's high-profile Question Time programme in May this year. It was a brave decision for someone to take on the big issues of the day on a programme that was not in his native tongue, but he tackled it head on and gave full and effusive answers to all that was asked of him.

He was forthright on his views on the war in Ukraine and also about the need to make sure that everyone has access to fuel and heating, no matter what the increase in price. He also laid out his green credentials.

But, as the Question Time host Fiona Bruce pointed out in a rather unfair manner, his green credentials were somewhat at odds with his British Racing Green credentials as a Formula 1 driver for Aston Martin.

Vettel handled the barb with good grace, but it was stinging. How can a driver who wants to save the world also go around polluting it with the exhaust gases from his F1 machine?

And that is the internal struggle that Vettel has been weighing up over the last few months as the clock was ticking down on his time in grand prix racing.

So often he has been a voice for good: for example, hitting out against oppressive regimes in countries such as Saudi Arabia, a venue where he lined up on the grid in 2021 when it hosted its maiden grand prix. He is very candid about that.

And it is that forthrightness that will be lost from the sport, and that is perhaps why there has been such an outpouring of emotion from



Parting shot: the German's final year with Aston



Photos: Motorsport Images

Vettel made his debut in the US Grand Prix in 2007



Winning with Toro Rosso at Monza in 2008 showed that the potential was there



First World title in 2010

other drivers on the grid. Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton feels like he has lost an ally who will speak out on issues that the Merc man cares deeply about too.

In his retirement statement, Vettel said: "My passion [for racing in Formula 1] comes with certain aspects that I've learned to dislike. They might be solved in the future, but the will to apply that change has to grow much stronger and has to be leading to action today. Talk is not enough, and we cannot afford to wait. There is no alternative, the race [to change the world] is under way."

There is no doubt that Vettel will find no problem occupying himself now the final chequered flag has fallen on his top-flight career. But reflecting on his achievements and his armfuls of success and numerous records, it is hard to pinpoint just where he will stand in the list of great World champions. Winning four crowns puts him equal fourth on the all-time line-up, but is that enough?

Although he is engaging, humourous and has a great line in self-deprecation, it seems that the wider world struggles

to embrace the boy from Heppenheim.

Perhaps it is the perception of Red Bull as the nouveau riche of the Formula 1 paddock when Austrian millions helped turn the squad into a frontrunning threat in the earlier part of this century. Maybe it was Vettel's seemingly relentless winning record between 2010 and 2013 that simply turned the public off him?

Whatever the reasons might be, Vettel has struggled to appeal to the public consciousness in the same way as a driver like Jenson Button, Rubens Barrichello or Mark Webber have done, for example. And that is a real puzzle.

It is notable, though, that those who have raced against him over the decade and more he has been on the Formula 1 grid have shown a level of support for the German which goes way beyond that which is normally seen. That is probably a more accurate reflection of the impact he has made.

By rights, time should be kind to Vettel and make his achievements finally earn the recognition they deserve. The racer himself deserves that much. Farewell Seb.

*"Vettel is a contradiction, and this has become increasingly apparent"*

# FEATURE



Starting from scratch Smiley and Restart got TCR UK's 2022 title



New Restart team had amazing debut

## RESTART AS YOU MEAN TO GO ON

**Ex-BTCC pair Bert Taylor and Chris Smiley had an extraordinary last-minute effort to get on this year's TCR UK grid, and they won the title. Graham Keilloh explains**

**A** few weeks before the start of this 2022 racing season, it seemed unlikely that Bert Taylor would be involved.

The former long-time team boss of BTC Racing in the British Touring Car Championship had a severe double blow in early 2021. "I'd had 23 or 24 days of Covid and I got over it and then six days later I had a stroke," Taylor tells Motorsport News. "So of course it was like 'will I ever recover from it?'

"I didn't really know how life was going to be and my wife didn't really want me to do it again because of what I'd already been through."

"But I thought if we don't do something about it then we won't be racing, and then Ben [his son and engineer] would lose his job and then Chris [Smiley] had lost his drives and I thought hold on a minute, I need to have a bit of a rethink here."

BTCC racer Smiley had raced, and won, with BTC between 2017 and '19 before two years with Excler8, and he jumped at the chance to join his old boss. Taylor recalls: "I rung Chris and I said 'would you drive for us again if we were to race?' And he said 'yeah', but I said 'I

don't know what we're going to do', he said 'I don't care, I'll drive'."

And there was an opportunity. Bosses at JAS Motorsport, which builds Honda's tin-top racers, were keen to have a Honda Civic Fk7 in the newly invigorated TCR UK championship, which was set for grids of well over 20.

Taylor and JAS boss Mads Fischer made contact, and a deal with quickly done to race in TCR UK with Taylor's newly formed, and appropriately monikered, Restart Racing team. But there was a snag: the initial contact was just three weeks before Oulton Park's season-opener.

"It was a little bit of a last-minute call," Fischer tells MN, "but I thought why not go for it because we want to have a car in the UK and also the pedigree from Bert and Chris, I said OK this one we have to proceed because this could be something good."

There was though another snag: the Civic was in Italy. But before anyone knew it Smiley's father Charlie set off from Northern Ireland for Milan in a van and trailer to pick the car up.

"There was no other way around it," Smiley explains to MN of his dad's sacrifice. "Everyone was too busy because it's the start of the motorsport

season, we had to go and do it ourselves."

The car reached Taylor's house on the Monday before Oulton. And the effort truly was starting from scratch. "We didn't have a toolbox, we didn't have any tools, we had nothing, we didn't even have bottle charging equipment," Taylor explains.

After a couple of days' preparation they set off on Thursday for Oulton's pre-race test the following day. "We went alright [in the test]," Taylor notes, "but there was such a lot to do because it is on different tyres and it had different fuel so we had to drain the tanks and change the tyres and

all the wheels were on the old tyres."

Smiley nevertheless loved the car, then on Saturday it all came to fruition as he took pole position. Moreover come Monday (there was no racing on Sunday due to Easter weekend scheduling) Smiley won the curtain-raiser race, leading all the way.

"It was just insane," Taylor says, "you didn't even have the equipment, you didn't even know you were going to be racing, and you got the car on a Monday, the emotion as well because he'd [Smiley] lost his drive, Ben had lost his job and I suffered with having the stroke and the

Covid, so it was like wow. Four of us were sat in the back of the truck and just looking at each other and didn't know what had happened."

Bert though cautioned the year wouldn't be easy. They faced high-standard hot-shoe rivals. So it proved, plus Restart had setbacks during the season both in on-track incidents and carrying success ballast (see below).

At Donington Park next up Smiley again took pole and led, but this time was taken out. "He managed to get back on the track but he was miles away," Taylor recalls. "He came in, and we



Smiley and Restart represented the UK in the FIA Motorsport Games

**"We had nothing, not even a toolbox"**

**Bert Taylor**

### SMILEY'S ROUND BY ROUND



Smiley leads the way at Oulton

**Meeting 1**  
When: April 16-18  
Where: Oulton Park International  
Qualifying: 1st  
Race 1: 1st  
Race 2: 5th

Mere days after picking up the car Chris Smiley and the newly formed Restart Racing outfit takes pole in their JAS Motorsport Honda Civic by 0.2 seconds. Smiley then leads all the way in the Easter Monday season-opening race, then climbs from 10th to fifth in the reversed-grid race two.

**Meeting 2**  
When: May 28-29  
Where: Donington Park GP  
Qualifying: 1st  
Race 1: 14th  
Race 2: 2nd

Smiley takes another pole position in meeting two, but while leading race one is fired off the road approaching McLeans by Adam Shepherd, and finishes 14th. In race two Smiley climbs from 14th to sixth on lap one, and is second just after half distance, where he finishes four seconds shy of Max Hart.

**Meeting 3**  
When: June 18-19  
Where: Brands Hatch Indy  
Qualifying: 7th  
Race 1: 2nd  
Race 2: Ret  
Race 3: 8th

Maximum success ballast is a particular impediment at stop-start Brands Hatch Indy, but Smiley salvages a second-place finish in race one wherein the wet weather does not penalise his extra weight so much. But early race-two contact means retirement with a damaged radiator. He gets eighth in race three, in the year's only triple header.

**Meeting 4**  
When: July 16  
Where: Oulton Park Island  
Qualifying: 5th  
Race 1: 4th  
Race 2: 4th

Smiley again is short of sharp-end pace on an Oulton Park Island layout that again really penalises the Civic's maximum weight. But he "made the most out of not having the fastest car" with two fourth-place finishes that he says "maximised our points".



Team was in disbelief as Smiley took Oulton win

cleaned it all out, got him back on the track and he joined on the back, and he started the whole of the straight and one corner off of them."

Smiley recovered to 14th, and from that starting position for race two scampered to second. The driver observes: "Your worst weekend is the weekend that decides your championship, so you have to be always fighting back."

Castle Combe was similarly memorable, and similarly tested their recovery skills. Smiley again started from race-one pole. "We're sitting with the launch control in the car and they put the five-second board up," Smiley explains, "and it didn't take five seconds, it took more like 15 for whatever reason, and the clutch welded itself together and it stalled on the grid."

Smiley nevertheless charged through to finish fifth, but his problems weren't over. The tight time between the two races meant the team couldn't replace the clutch, so Smiley had to start race two from the pits with a push. Yet he charged again and finished fourth.

"It was just emotional for everybody," Taylor says of Combe, "because you thought the championship had gone but

not him [Smiley], he came back and he drove it absolutely impeccable. And then of course the second race we start in the pitlane, whole half a straight down [and Smiley finishes fourth], it was just utopia, because we knew then this was going our way, the championship, we were back in the mix."

Another setback at the season's penultimate round, back at Donington, meant for Snetterton's title decider Smiley was level on points with Isaac Smith at the summit, albeit Smiley nosed ahead on countback.

Smiley in Norfolk extended his advantage with an imperious race-one win from pole. That left the reversed-grid finale race. "It can go wrong very quickly because all the cars are out of position, and some people get a little bit excited, you can be taken off," Smiley says. "But we raced well and we were right behind Isaac Smith the whole race and he was starting to defend quite heavily and trying to back me up. And he made a mistake on the first corner with all the pressure we put on him, that was three laps to go at that point, I know it was completely done then."

"With everything that happened this year, the way that they'd done it in such

a short period of time, it was an unbelievable feeling to have won the championship."

The outfit also represented the UK in the end-of-season FIA Motorsport Games at Paul Ricard. Despite that track being a very different challenge, Smiley finished eighth. "We were the first car on the road that didn't compete in the national series or had never been at the circuit before," Smiley notes.

The future is bright too. Taylor wants to defend the title plus has eyes on next year's TCR World Final. While Fischer would like Restart to run more Hondas. "It's difficult to make anything better than what they have done [in 2022]," Fischer says. "Restart going up to two cars [in 2023], that would be the first target for us."

"I've won two TVR championships, I won oval hot rod World championship," Taylor reflects, "and when I look back on [2022], you wouldn't be able to write it would you? I didn't really know if I would ever recover from the stroke, Ben loses his job, and then all of a sudden we're right in it back to racing, doing what we all love and we enter a championship that's very competitive; 15 races later we're champions."

**Meeting 5**  
When: August 6  
Where: Castle Combe  
Qualifying: 1st  
Race 1: 5th  
Race 2: 4th  
The Civic is back to its pacesetting best in Wiltshire and Smiley takes pole. However his clutch welds itself together on startline, leaving him stranded. He charges back to finish fifth. The quick turnaround means he has to start race two still clutch-less from the pits and he again charges, this time to fourth.

**Meeting 6**  
When: August 29  
Where: Donington Park National  
Qualifying: 2nd  
Race 1: 3rd  
Race 2: Ret  
Smiley qualifies second and finishes race one in third, in both cases ahead of his chief title rival Isaac Smith. However Smiley's apparent championship command is dashed when he's taken out at the first corner in race two. He and Smith are neck-and-neck heading into the finale in two months' time...

**Meeting 7**  
When: October 23  
Where: Snetterton 200  
Qualifying: 1st  
Race 1: 1st  
Race 2: 3rd  
A dominant race-one win from pole puts Smiley into the championship box seat ahead of Smith with one race remaining. In that reversed-grid encounter Smiley is able to follow Smith through the pack, then Smiley's title is secure when Smith, with Smiley right behind him, leaves the track at Turn 1 late on.



The spoils...

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, FIA Motorsport Games

## LAST-MINUTE DASH...



Smiley: unlikely pole and win

**Monday March 28:** Bert Taylor contacts JAS Motorsport's Mads Fischer

**Monday April 4:** Deal completed for Taylor to race JAS Honda in TCR UK with Chris Smiley driving, in newly formed Restart Racing team

**Monday April 4 to Sunday April 10:** Smiley's dad Charlie does 2500-mile round trip from Northern Ireland to near Milan to pick up car

**Monday April 11:** Smiley leaves Northern Ireland with car and arrives at Taylor's house in Essex

**Monday April 11 to Thursday April 14:** Car is prepared for round one

**Thursday April 14:** Car leaves Essex for Oulton Park

**Friday April 15:** Oulton Park pre-race testing

**Saturday April 16:** Smiley takes pole position for round one

**Monday April 18:** Smiley wins round one



Taylor (r) overcame a number of setbacks to return to podium top

# MN AWARDS 2022

## THE MOTORSPORT NEWS AWARDS: THE STAND-OUT PERFORMERS OF 2022 SET TO BE RECOGNISED

*It is that time of year: we are on the hunt for your favourite of the season just gone. By Matt James*



### HOW TO VOTE

- Visit [fastcar.co.uk/motorsportnews](http://fastcar.co.uk/motorsportnews)
- Find your favourite and vote

**T**he racing and rally engines are on the verge of being switched off for the winter, and there are some golden memories from the last few months to reflect on. And that is exactly why the Motorsport News Awards are here.

We need your help as we aim to select our National Racing Driver of the Year and the National Rally Driver of the Year.

Check out the nominations on this page and it is simple to vote: simply head to our fastcar website and make your voice heard. Details of how to do this are in the panel above.

The other six winners will be chosen by MN's panel of experts. You can see the shortlists in the sidebar on this page. The results and the winners will be revealed in our December 1 issue.

### RACING DRIVER OF THE YEAR - THE SHORTLIST

**1 Tom Ingram**  
British Touring Car champion

**2 Ash Sutton**  
British Touring Car runner-up

**3 Jake Hill**  
British Touring Car Championship, third

**4 Ian Loggie**  
British GT title winner

**5 Luke Browning**  
GB3 champion

**6 Alex Dunne**  
British F4 champion

**7 Kiern Jewiss**  
Porsche Carrera Cup GB champion

**8 Sam Weller**  
Mini Challenge UK title winner

**9 James Kellett**  
Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion

**10 Sennan Fielding**  
British GT4 champion



### RALLY DRIVER OF THE YEAR

**1 Osian Pryce**  
British Rally Championship winner

**2 Keith Cronin**  
British Rally Championship frontrunner

**3 Elliot Payne**  
BTRDA Rally Series champion

**4 David Henderson**  
Winner in Scotland and on BTRDA events

**5 David Bogie**  
Serial rallying winner in Scotland

**6 Neil Roskell**  
MN Circuit Rally winner, second in Asphalt series

**7 Matthew Hirst**  
Welsh Rally champion, BTRDA runner-up

**8 Josh Moffett**  
Irish Tarmac champion

**9 Steve Wood**  
Asphalt Rally champion

**10 Josh Payton**  
MN Circuit series frontrunner



**1 RISING STAR OF THE YEAR**

- **Alex Dunne**
- **Josh Rowledge**
- **Will MacIntyre**
- **Eamonn Kelly**
- **Elliot Payne**
- **Luke Browning**
- **Patrick O'Donovan**
- **Jamie Day**

**2 HISTORICS DRIVER OF THE YEAR**

- **Samuel Harrison**
- **Julian Thomas**
- **Tom Bradshaw**
- **Henri Grehan**
- **Benn Simms**
- **Matt Edwards**
- **Ben Mitchell**
- **Matt Wrigley**

**3 SPORTING SCENE DRIVER**

- **Wallace Menzies**
- **Alex Summers**
- **Rob McDonald**
- **Charlie Sworder**
- **Patrick O'Donovan**
- **Charlie Guinchard**
- **Matthew Ryder**
- **Carl Waller-Barrett**

**4 TEAM OF THE YEAR**

- **RAM Racing**
- **Hitech Grand Prix**
- **Team Brit**
- **Fortec Motorsports**
- **Enduro Motorsport**
- **Excelr8 Motorsport**
- **OC Racing**
- **Rallysport**

**5 SERIES OF THE YEAR**

- **BTRDA Rally Series**
- **Historic Formula**
- **Ford 2000**
- **Masters Gentlemen Drivers**
- **GB3**
- **CityCar Cup**
- **Junior Saloon Car Championship**
- **BTCC**
- **British GT**

**6 EVENT OF THE YEAR**

- **National Hot Rod World Final**
- **The Classic, Silverstone**
- **Classic Nostalgia, Shelsley Walsh**
- **MG Live!**
- **Mini Festival, Brands Hatch**
- **BTCC Knockhill**
- **Rali Ceredigion**
- **Trackrod Rally Yorkshire**

## FEATURE

# SAM BIRD:

## I'M LOVING EVERY MOMENT OF MY CAREER

**Matt James** puts the questions to the Jaguar Formula E racer, who is about to tackle a new season of the all-electric single-seater competition



Sam Bird: ready for Formula E season

**S**am Bird's career has taken him to the very cusp of Formula 1. The Surrey racer was one of the first young drivers to test for Mercedes on the edge of its era of dominance, but he was already au fait with grand prix machinery by that stage of his stellar early career.

Bird started out with a lot of determination, but without the deep pockets that underpin a lot of rising stars. Nevertheless, the now 35-year-old won races in every junior racing category that he tackled, which took him all the way to becoming a GP2 runner up in 2013. Sadly, even that wasn't enough to unlock the gates to a grand prix drive.

Since then, he has forged a healthy and title-winning career in sportscars and has been a mainstay of the all-electric Formula E category since its inception in 2014. He is ready to go on the attack again as part of the Jaguar TCS squad as the series embraces its new Gen3 cars in 2023.

He kindly took time out of his busy schedule to tackle the MN readers' questions, and we are grateful.

**Question:** What got you into motorsport in the first place? Was it something within your family, or something you found yourself?

**Steven Nye**

Via email

**Sam Bird:** "My mum's ex-husband was a car and motorsport journalist, Clive Richardson. He knew the Formula 1 drivers back in the 1970s and early 1980s. So my mum was involved in the motorsport circle as such very loosely.

"But there was no history of racing in my background. Then mum met my dad and they had me. There was no great passion for going motor racing, but they used to enjoy watching F1 on the TV. Every other Sunday, after football practice, we would gather around the TV to watch. I think back then it was on Eurosport. It was the early 1990s. I used to absolutely love watching these individuals racing these incredible cars and I would tell my parents that it is what I wanted to do. I kept asking them how I could get involved and I used to write them letters and slip it under their bedroom door at night begging them to take me go karting.

"For my eighth birthday they took me to Silverstone and I had my first-ever go in a kart. Clearly I loved it. If my grades were good at the end of every school

Photos: Motorsport Images, Jakob Ebrey



Bird in Formula BMW UK's maiden season in 2004

term – so three or four times a year – they would take me to Clapham or Streatham to the kart circuits there. I would be allowed to have a morning at Playscape, which ran the sessions there.

“One of the guys there told my parents that I had kind of outgrown that after a while. They could see I was quick and good and I had all the right lines and things. They asked my parents if they had thought of entering me into a championship. They mentioned Formula 6, which was based in the south of the UK and it wasn’t too expensive, and so they suggested I should see how I got on in that.

“They entered me in that and that is where the ball started rolling.”

**MN:** How did you get on in Formula 6?  
**SB:** “After I had got off my novice plates, I won every race. I couldn’t win the championship because you have to do the first six races on novice plate and had to start from the back of the grid,

so that meant I was too far behind in the points. I think I started at the back for my last novice race and I won it outright.

“Then I got into Super One, but the problem was, for me, was that I went to quite a prestigious school and then I went to boarding school. Because I was good at other sports, they weren’t very keen on me missing other school activities. So firstly there was a budget issue: I couldn’t afford the testing time that other kids could. But also, I couldn’t afford to miss time at school. So there were times during Super One where I would literally just turn up for morning warm-up without any practice or testing and then go and race, so that meant I never really competed at the level I wanted to in karting. So, when I was 16, I went into a scholarship for the new Formula BMW UK scholarship.”

**Question:** You were in on the ground floor of Formula BMW UK. Why do you choose to go down that route? Did you see that as a risk because it was new, or was that an advantage?

**Emma Facey**

**Via email**

**SB:** “It was about the money, really. But it is a little bit like in karting. When you don’t know about the route forwards and you have no-one to tell you what is the right direction and how you are going to get there, it is quite hard. We were doing ‘O’ Plate ICA karting at Clay Pigeon and Carlin was there with a Formula BMW car. I had heard of them.

“My mum and I went over to see this car, this single-seater. Steve Holman was there from Carlin. I got talking to



Nations Cup winner Bird, Marco Holzer, Nico Hulkenberg and Sebastien Buemi on the 2005 podium

**“Becoming a BMW scholar was the start for me”**

**Sam Bird**

continued on page 24

# FEATURE



Bird was fourth in Formula Renault UK in 2006

***"I would really punish myself for not doing well"***

**Sam Bird**



Euroseries F3 battles for Bird in 2009, here at the Norisring

him and he told me about this BMW Scholarship was happening and I suggested I put my name forward for that. I did, and before I knew it, I was off to Valencia and pounding round in cars over there. It was a great introduction to single-seaters.

"I didn't know what the best route was. Should I have done Formula Renault at the beginning? Should I have done other things? In my mind, I figured it wasn't a risk because Carlin was doing it and they are a good team, so I thought it can't have been bad..."

"When you have been offered a scholarship from one of the biggest car brands in the world, you are certainly not going to turn that down. Looking back I suppose it could be seen as a little bit of a risk, but Formula BMW became a very big championship. It had already made a name for itself in Germany and BMW really did a super job with a car that was very basic but that was exactly what was needed and what was required at that stage of my career."

**Question: What is the best piece of advice you have had from a driver coach or mentor in your motorsport career?**

**Andy Priaulx**  
Via email

**SB:** "Wow, Andy Priaulx has asked me a question! I am the one that needs to be asking him questions!"

"He was very much onboard with all the scholars and was there for advice and guidance. Without blowing smoke up Andy's backside, the relationship that I had with him as a young driver was superb. It was really important to me at quite a vital stage in my career."

"I would really punish myself mentally for not doing well. It really hurt me and I think that Andy could see that and he took me under his wing a little bit. I will be forever grateful for Andy not only being my coach but also becoming a good friend."

"He was like a hero to me. Crikey, I was getting coached by then a two-time and going on to be a three-time World touring car champion and somebody that BMW trusted with their Formula 1 cars at the time. I knew it didn't get any better than that. He is an incredible guy."

"To this day, he is a good friend and he is someone I can go to and trust their opinion. And it has also been amazing to share a track with him at Le Mans and places like that. He is someone I grew up admiring so much so it has been a nice full circle."

**MN:** And the UK was the Nations Cup winner in 2005 in the Formula BMW World Final and you went on the podium? You were alongside Sébastien Buemi and Nico Hulkenberg...

**SB:** "Yes, those two turned out alright, didn't they!..."

**Question: You did some aero tests with**

**Williams in 2007: was that due to your links from your Formula BMW days? Was that your first outing in an F1 car, and what was it like?**

**Malcolm Munt**  
Via email

**SB:** "I actually did a lot of aero testing for Williams from 2007 through to the end of 2009. I had won a couple of races in Formula 3 in 2007 and through my connections with Formula BMW, I knew Jonathan Williams. I knew him well and I kept that relationship going. I spoke to him regularly to keep him up to date with what I was up to."

"I had won at Spa in the British F3 International Series – I had done a good job and I won it quite comfortably. I got home from that and I got a phone call on my mobile and it was Jonny We chatted for a bit and then he asked me what I was doing on a certain four days.

"He asked if I would go and conduct some aero duties for Williams in the FW29, the 2007 car looking ahead to the 2008 year. Everybody that season had to go to the McLaren-based technology on the steering wheels. So I had to go through all the driver defaults and do some other aero stuff as well at Kemble airfield – and I got paid! In fact, every day that I have ever done in a Formula 1 car, I have been paid for – which is quite cool. Somewhere, I still have the first cheque. I never cashed it, I framed it instead."

**MN:** So when you first got to drive a Formula 1 car, what did it feel like? Were you blown away?

**SB:** "It was a cold misty morning at Kemble airfield and because it was the first day with this new technology, Williams brought everyone along. There were four of these massive trucks, all the engineers were there, all just for this one car. You turn up and think 'Oh my God, all these people are there trusting me to drive their car'. Back then, the engines just sounded so impressive. When it fired up, I remember thinking that in 10 minutes or so, I was going to be at the controls of that thing and it was what I had been dreaming about for all of my life. I was praying that I just didn't muck it up!"

"Anyhow, I am quite small in stature and the sidepods on a Formula 1 car then were quite wide and quite tall, certainly compared to a Formula 3 car, which is what I was used to. So I went to the F1 car and went to swing my leg in to get into the cockpit and ended up effectively side-volleying the sidepod, right in front of everyone. All the mechanics were laughing. That just ramped up the nerves for me even more..."

"Williams at the time had a team manager called Dickie Stanford. He is someone I admire and get on with superbly. I built up a rapport with him and we got on really well throughout the days of running. He obviously thought I



Bird rates Macau as one of the most challenging race tracks



Bird has sampled many famous Williams cars

was decent enough with what I was doing that he kept on asking me back to do more. I absolutely loved it. I know it was just going up and down a straight but when you are getting paid by a Formula 1 team because they trust you and they value your work there is no better feeling."

**MN:** You drove some awesome Williams cars up the hill at Goodwood too?

**SB:** "I have driven a lot of F1 cars up the hill now, which has been a pleasure, but to drive Damon Hill's title-winning Williams FW18 was pretty special. It was the actual chassis that he had used in Japan that season when he clinched the title. I also had the privilege of shaking it down last year too prior to it doing a roll-out at Silverstone.

"Just getting in it again, the sound of it is outrageous. It is so biblically loud. F1 cars these days, they don't sound anywhere near as amazing as that. It is immense."

**Question:** Through Formula Renault, Formula 3, World Series and GP2, you went toe-to-toe with some of the most talented crop of up-and-coming drivers at the time. Who did you regard as your toughest rival?

**Barry May**

Via email

**SB:** "There are probably three stand-outs for me. My first year in GP2 in 2010 I had a very strong year. I was with ART. There were two drivers going for the championship in Sergio Perez and Pastor Maldonado but myself and my team-mate, who is one of my stand-out drivers, were the leading rookies of the year. That team-mate was Jules Bianchi.

"Jules not only was my team-mate, but he became a really good friend too. What happened to him, when he was killed in 2015, really affected me for a long period but I look back now at him and the races I had against him with massive fondness. He was so talented – his braking technique, his ability, the way he would be able to extract

everything from the car was sublime. I had a great year against him and I won a race that season while Jules didn't, and had it not been for quite a few mishaps I think I would have come higher up the championship than fifth – I was only a couple of points away from third place at the end.

"I remember Barcelona, for example. It was probably the race of my life and I had so much speed, but I had to do an extra pitstop for a new nosecone and I ended up ninth... I was able to chuck the car up the inside of people and it would stick. That was the opening meeting of the year and I think it was almost because of that that people were scared to see me in their mirror. People always knew that I would try to pull off an overtake at some time.

"Progressing forwards to 2011, I had a difficult year in GP2, I had to move teams to iSport because ART took Esteban Gutierrez, who had won GP3 with them and needed to move up. So I was kind of sidelined from the team even though I didn't want to leave. They couldn't run three cars. I had a tough year with iSport as they never got to grips with the new chassis and tyre. It was disappointing. This is where I happened across the second of the guys who I rate as the toughest, and that is Romain Grosjean. I didn't get to know him too well as a person but he was very, very good. We had a cracking race together in the first round of the year in Turkey. We got away at the front of the feature race and I think we finished close to 40 seconds in front of everyone else. Jules was third. Romain and I had gone toe-to-toe and he just didn't make a mistake. He continued like that all year. OK, so he never won a race in Formula 1 but when he was at Lotus he came mighty close. He has been a force within the world of motorsport for a long period.

"The third guy who I raced against growing up who was pretty special was Robin Frijns. I raced him in Formula Renault 3.5 in 2012. He had moved up

from Formula BMW, through Formula Renault and into 3.5, and he just won everything that was out there. He was really good, and the final round came down to a battle between me, him and Jules Bianchi in Spain. OK, Robin won it in a manner that was not the best. He deliberately drove Jules off the track to win the title. It wasn't the greatest way to win, but I have been around motorsport for a long while now and I know that it has happened before and it will happen again.

"It was out of character for Robin, because he is one of the nicest blokes around. He is super friendly, I love chatting to him and he has become a very good mate. He is so laid back outside the car, he is like a sloth, but once he is in it, he is so bloody fast!

"I would probably have to put in a side note to Antonio Felix da Costa too as a very fast guy. He did Formula Renault 3.5 with us. Once he had got to grips with it, he just won and won and won. And, he wouldn't just win, he would smash it out of the park."

**Question:** Do you regard 2013, when you finished second in GP2, as the one that got away?

**Jack Crowther**

Via email

**SB:** "It was never really mine to lose as I was never leading the championship. If I had been leading the points and I had stalled [which Bird did] from where I was on the grid in the final round in Abu Dhabi, then I would absolutely agree that I had let it slip away. But the championship isn't won on just one race. There are 20 races in the year and Fabio Leimer won more races than me and won it in the end

"I could probably look at seven or eight races that year where I should have done better. That's just the way it is. I did win a lot of races that year and I did showcase a lot of speed, especially when the car was in a decent window. We found out in the middle of the year that there was an issue with my chassis,

continued on page 26



Is anybody home? A weary Bird takes to the Le Mans podium in 2015

# FEATURE



Bird got a full Mercedes test at Abu Dhabi at the end of 2010



A highlight in GP2 was second place with Russian Time in 2013



Bird loved working with the ART team in GP2, here in 2010

and once that was resolved, we put together some really good results and we got the momentum behind us.

“So I would agree and disagree with Jack’s point at the same time. I would agree that I was in front of him on the grid and had I got off the line, maybe things would have been different, but that one race didn’t define my year and it was still a good year.

“The other thing to think about is would that title win, if I had have achieved it, have changed anything for me? The answer is absolutely not. I still wouldn’t have got a Formula 1 seat. I would still be where I am today, even with a GP2 championship under my belt.

“Back then, Mercedes – who I had tested for in Formula 1 – didn’t really have a junior programme or academy. It was only after I left and [team boss] Toto Wolff really got his input into the team that that started to happen.”

**SB:** How did the test deal with Merc come about?

**SB:** “I tested with them in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013. In 2007, [Merc sporting director] Ron Meadows’ son Michael was racing against me in F3. I knew Ronnie through his son and Ronnie had kept tabs on me. After that race in Barcelona that I had talked about in GP2, I was walking back to the paddock via the F1 paddock and I was really fed up because I had come ninth. I bumped into Ronnie and he said that he had been impressed with my drive. He told me to keep that up. I kept in touch with Ronnie and I won in GP2 at Monza. There were rumours and my name was being touted around the F1 paddock about who might be interested in taking me to the Rookie Test at the end of the year. It was a new thing back then.

“Ronnie called me up one day and he said he wanted me for both days of the Rookie Test. I went and did a seat fitting and I did an extensive programme on the simulator. It was all preparing me to be the third driver for 2011. I did the test and it went really well, but I never got

the chance to go on soft tyres or on low fuel. In the afternoon on the second day, I broke the lap record but then Jean-Eric Vergne at Red Bull put soft tyres out and went fastest. But, for a period of about half an hour, I had the lap record.”

**MN:** That is amazing. How close were you then to an F1 drive?

**SB:** “I was a million miles away. You can think you are close but, looking back I was never there. My destiny was, unfortunately, never to race in Formula 1. This is just me being really honest – am I good enough to warrant someone to immediately pay me to be in a Formula 1 seat? And the answer is no.

“When you look at the talent that has come up through the years, and the results they have got in the junior formulae, most of them have a better CV than I have got, and that is fine. What I needed probably was funding and I just didn’t have that backing.

“I actually went to the Caterham F1 team with a view to being their second driver for 2014 and I met with the team. I met with [team boss] Cyril Abiteboul and I went in the simulator. They were quite keen and we were starting to talk about contracts, but then I got a call one day and they told me that Marcus Ericsson was coming in with £20 million.

“At that point, I realised it wasn’t going to happen for me because there were too many guys with the money. When I was exiting GP2, so was Felipe Nasr, Ericsson and quite a few others who could bring a big budget. We were all similar-ish on pace but I couldn’t fight against the deep pockets that these guys had. I was never going to jump in a Mercedes.

“But I think if I had been a couple of years younger and I had been doing GP2 a couple of years later and I was in something like the Mercedes programme then maybe I would have stood a chance, but it wasn’t going to be for me.”

**Question:** How close was Sam to

**moving to IndyCar with Chip Ganassi after Dario Franchitti’s career-ending crash in 2013?**

**Andy Hallberg**

**Via Facebook**

**SB:** “There has been discussions in the past. It wasn’t at the time that Dario crashed though. I think it was after season one or season two of Formula E, where I was starting to have some serious discussions with [Chip Ganassi Racing managing director] Mike Hull and Chip.

“IndyCar is something that I have always wanted to do and I still want to do. I would love the opportunity to race an IndyCar. I love the series, I love the teams.

“I am very happy where I am at Jaguar TCS Racing in Formula E right now, but I would dearly love the opportunity to race an IndyCar at some point and to do the Indy 500. I also think it is a car that would suit me in terms of the physicality of it. I am a little British bulldog and I don’t mind wrestling a car around for a couple of hours – that would be good fun.

“So yes, those conversations did happen and we did get down the line with it but it never came to be.”

**Question:** You clicked with Formula E straight away in its inaugural season in 2014-2015 – how alien were the cars to drive at that point?

**Gary Whiting**

**Via email**

**SB:** “As a driver, it is something you just get on with. As a driver, you have got his in-built ability to extract a lap time from anything you sit in and you get an understanding of how you are going to do that.

“The difficulty came in trying to work out how to manage a race. That was the tough part back then, in terms of how to use the energy. Each car had 28kW of energy and we had to do the car swap then. The information available to the driver then and to the team was super-limited and the technology we had in



Bird did the donkey work at Le Mans in LMP2 in 2015

terms of software was zero at the start. We didn't have anything at Virgin Racing, and we had no clue what to do in terms of race strategy or how we were going to X amount of laps in round one around Beijing.

"We didn't know whether to limit the power and then go flat out. Did we lift down the straights? Did we pull the regen paddle that hadn't been mapped? That was the really difficult bit, just managing the race correctly. But we got there and we had a clear-out of the engineers with one test day to go before the start of the season because we felt they weren't doing a very good job.

"A guy called Patrick Coorey came in as my race engineer and he transformed the team, he really did. We went from being a backmarker in testing to being a podium finisher in race one – albeit a lucky one after the top two collided – before going on to win round two in Malaysia because of good pace and good engine management."

**MN:** Did you feel like a pioneer?

**SB:** "I did feel like a pioneer, but very much a backseat one! Lucas di Grassi was very very actively involved in the beginning in pushing the name of Formula E. He has got a lot of things invested in it and he knows [series boss] Alejandro Agag well. They go back to GP2 days together. But I was one of the

first to put my name own as a signed driver and I am proud that I have done every season of it since it started. To be part of the furniture for such a long period has been awesome."

**MN:** Are there things about racing an electric car that other drivers might not understand?

**SB:** "With the software and the technology available now to the teams and to the drivers then I think it should be quite an easy transition. If you are quick in a normal car, you will be quick in a Formula E car as well. Having said that, it is challenging and the driver line-up in Formula E is really strong. Formula 1 is Formula 1 and it will always be the pinnacle of motorsport, but in terms of driver line-up, Formula E isn't far behind: It is stunning. When you look at the qualifying groups, you are looking at the list and trying to work out where there might be a weakness and you simply can't find one. You know it is always going to be a tough day.

"In season one and season two, the driver would be able to make more of a difference with how they used the energy. At the beginning of the championship, one of the best drivers I have raced against, Jean-Eric Vergne – a double title winner – wasn't all that good at the energy management side of

things. I think that was because it was more manual, and he was coming from Formula 1 where he wasn't used to management so much, he struggled. He certainly doesn't struggle now! He is awesome."

**Question: How did the link to AF Corse come about? You have been with the Ferrari sportscar team since 2014...**

**Ed Sleigh**

**Via email**

**SB:** "I had the opportunity to move to sportscars in 2007 with Risi Competition. My management at the time had their eyes set on getting me into Formula 1 and they were saying that I should aim to be a F1 World champion. Of course, I believed them and I went down that route – but I could have been a paid GT driver even in those early days.

"At the beginning of 2014, Kamui Kobayashi was stepping aside from his duties with AF Corse to do F1 and Ferrari needed a new driver and so they had a shootout between James Calado, myself and Jerome D'Ambrosio. We had the first test at Portimao in Portugal and it was too close to call between myself and James, and so they invited us back to Vallelunga and I got the nod.

"I then, for reasons that I would probably only ever put in a book, I had been given, out of kindness, an

opportunity to race for AF Corse in the Pro-Am car. It wasn't necessarily what I wanted and I wanted to prove to Ferrari that I deserved a role in the Pro car. I think I didn't understand my role correctly as a Pro in a Pro-Am category. I thought my job was to go out there and beat Gianmaria Bruni in the Pro AF Corse car. I would put in times in practice and qualifying as fast as him and then we got to Le Mans. I put it second on the grid of all the GTs. Bruni was on pole and I was second in the Am car, ahead of all the factory Porsches, Corvettes and Aston Martins – and I had never done Le Mans before. It was a bit of a shock really.

"But what followed that was a bit of a difficult period for me. I crashed in the rain on slicks as I was pushing probably too hard in those conditions and I hit the back of an Audi LMP1 car that was basically stopped in the middle of the road. The team was very angry with me and very disappointed and I had to take a year away from Ferrari. I had been told to look after the car and get it to the finish and I would have a career in the Pro car and I didn't do that. They felt like I had let them down and I had certainly let myself down.

"I went off to do LMP2 with G-Drive and I won the championship in that. I kept a relationship going with Antonello Coletta, the Ferrari GT head, and team boss Amato Ferrari. They were really good to me and after a year out they said to me that I had learned my lesson and they invited me to come back to the squad and they wanted to put me in the Pro car. That was that and I became a Ferrari driver. Pulling on a Ferrari race suit is something very special and something that I do dearly miss [Bird did not race with the team this year].

"I am actively looking to see what I can do with them in the future. I want to be back but it is very difficult trying to do a dual programme and right now, with a new generation of Formula E car coming on stream, it is highly tough. Having said that, some other drivers

manage it and I would love to be someone who can do that too."

**Question: What is the most memorable Le Mans that you took part in and why?**

**Harry Adams**

**Via Facebook**

**SB:** "Being on the podium at Le Mans in LMP2 in 2015 [alongside Julien Canal and Romain Rusinov] was pretty special for me. Excuse my English, but I have never been so f\*\*\*ed in my entire life as I was after that Le Mans!

"I was the main Pro driver in that car and I did so much driving it felt like I had been driving that car forever. There was about four and a half hours to go. I had gone back to the garage and the team boss came up to me and said 'are you good?' I said I was and then he said that the squad was really up against it to finish on the podium and he wanted me to go back in the car. He wanted me to do a triple stint – so I had to do the last four hours!

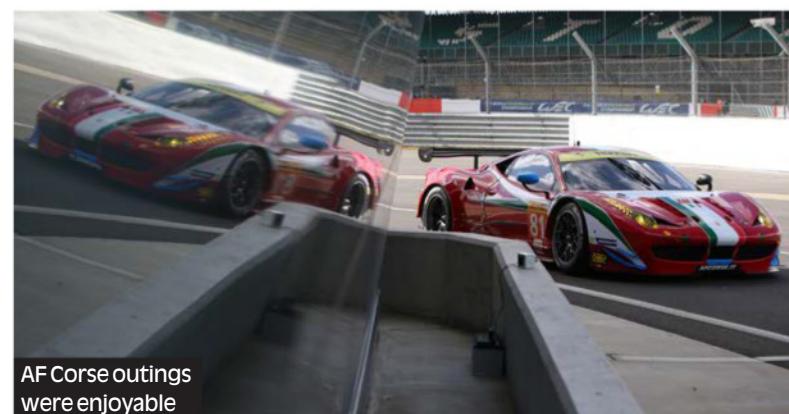
"I had already driven most of the night and then I had a little maybe three- or four-hour break. To do the last four hours was a killer, and it wasn't just a case of going around. I had to push to keep the podium hopes alive too. They asked for every lap to be on the limit and, to this day, it was probably the best four hours of driving that I have done in my life – and no-one really knows about it or speaks about it. The team boss new knew about it though and he gave me a hug after the race, but I was so drained. I was dead. I was emotionally and physically destroyed. It took me a couple of days to recover.

"There is a picture of me on the podium and you can see my eyes and it is like there is no one home! The trophy that you get for coming third at Le Mans in LMP2, I have got to say, given that it is such a big race, it is such a small trophy! But I guess it is about what it means and what it represents. You have claimed a rostrum in one of the biggest races in the world – I can only imagine what it is like to win it."

*continued on page 28*

**"I would love to tackle the Indy 500 one day"**

**Sam Bird**



AF Corse outings were enjoyable

# FEATURE

**Question: Which is more challenging? Monaco, Le Mans, Daytona or the Macau track?**

**Damien Doherty**

**Via email**

**SB:** "I don't think Monaco is that challenging. It is a tough track, but if you are in a good car and you are comfortable around there and you qualify well, you have almost got to do something silly to not win there. I have been fortunate enough to win there in GP2 and in Formula Renault 3.5, when Jules and I had a really good battle together. Although it is challenging because you have walls around you and it is twisty, if you like it and you are quick there, it is not so much of a challenge."

"Le Mans and Daytona are more of a challenge because the races are so long and they can throw so many things at you. Anything can happen in 24 hours: weather, technical difficulties, mistakes by yourself, mistakes by your team or a team-mate. But you are a team and everyone is working super hard for the good of the car. In endurance races, you win as a team and you lose as a team and that invokes such great camaraderie and I do love endurance racing."

"I would say Macau is more challenging than Monaco. If I had an order, I would say Le Mans is the toughest, followed by Daytona, Macau then Monaco."

"Macau is so tough because you compromise on car set-up. You need the straightline speed for the first sector, where it is all about having very very low wings. Everybody has minimal downforce and then you get to the mountain bit and that is difficult enough. Then you come out of the Melco hairpin and you have got two of the corners where you need the biggest balls you have ever had: Fisherman's and R-Bend. As you are shifting out of the hairpin, you know what's to come. You know that you have to carry the speed and if you don't, the lap time is done. That track is something really special. I was really jealous of Edoardo Mortara for going back there this year. I would simply love to do it again."

"There are so many races that I want to do, there just simply aren't enough invites...!"

**Question: Is it true you went training with Forest Green Rovers football club? How did that come about? Aren't you a Manchester United fan? What is your opinion on Cristiano Ronaldo?**

**Iain Elsey**

**Via email**

**SB:** "That is true, I did a publicity day with Forest Green Rovers. When I was a kid, I played for the south of England, so I played at a pretty decent level. But I hadn't kicked a ball properly for a decade when I went to Forest Green. It was a really good fun day out. Football

fitness is very different to racing driver fitness. Football fitness is very much stop-start, sprinting and things like that, and it is impressive to see their first touch on the ball and how comfortable they are in close quarters with each other and the ball."

"They were in league two at the time, so you can only imagine what it is like at clubs like Manchester City or Manchester United, or somewhere like that."

**MN:** So how come you are a Man U fan yourself then?

**SB:** "Because back in the day when I was a kid, you couldn't get local kits very readily and I was a Surrey boy. There was a local shop called Birthdays and it sold these red kits. I told my dad that for Christmas I wanted one of those kits because I didn't have a kit, and I used to go to football training at the weekend wearing my England pyjama top. But I upgraded it to this Man United top – the one sponsored by Sharp."

**MN:** And what about Ronaldo, who laid into his club in a TV interview last week?

**SB:** "It is so upsetting that the greatest player of all time, in my opinion, his legacy at the club is getting slightly tarnished. It is very difficult for a player, and for the world, to accept that he is not the player that he was. I think he is struggling to accept that. Ronaldo scoring 40 or 50 goals a year and terrifying defenders, that guy isn't quite there anymore. I think he has taken a step down this year – he is not showing the same sharpness."

"To put it in a racing perspective, it is similar, but not quite the same, as Daniel Ricciardo. This is a guy that everybody expects to be up there all the time because of his name and notoriety and he has won multiple races. He even gave Max Verstappen a run for his money in the Red Bull days. He has been super quick and everybody loves him. So, when it is not going well it is like you almost can't believe it. It is similar to the Ronaldo thing, but it is much more amplified in football simply because it is Cristiano Ronaldo."

**Question: You have recently started commentating on Formula 1 on BBC Radio 5 Live and I really enjoy listening. Is this something that came naturally to you? Can you see a career in the media?**

**James Hilton**

**Via email**

**SB:** "Given my age, I am having to start to dip my toe in the water with other things and in other areas of the sport. There are only so many years a driver can be at the top so yes, I am definitely looking towards doing that when I hang up my race helmet, but that isn't going to be for a good few years yet. I just want to make that clear: I am definitely not looking at retiring any time soon – I am talking a long time yet."

"I am really enjoying the 5 Live thing: I think I have a great face for radio. It is nice to learn a new skill set. I don't want to be coming out of my racing career and wonder what I will be doing next. I want to have things in order and things in place where I can just jump into a new role and things just move seamlessly. I don't want to be sitting around doing nothing."

**MN:** You seem to have taken to the role really well...

**SB:** "As long as I sound halfway intelligent then I am happy."

"I haven't listened back, because I hate listening to myself. I find that very hard, but I think I have brought across some reasonable points in the programmes."



Home town hero: Bird won on FE's UK debut in Battersea



Bird has become an important part of the Jag line-up

**Question: Who is the most intimidating team boss you have worked under?**

**Jason Inglis**

**Via email**

**SB:** "Frederic Vasseur when I was racing in GP2 for ART [founder of the team with Nicolas Todt and now team principal of Alfa Romeo in F1]. But not in a bad way though."

"It was more the fact that I admired him so much. I hung off his every word and he improved me no end as a driver and as a person."

"ART was at that time at the absolute peak of its powers when I joined [at the end of 2009]. I had wanted to drive for ART for years and so when the opportunity arose I think Frederic knew how much it meant to me. I think he could also see that there was some potential in me that had just not been unlocked yet. He extracted that out of me due to pure fear and the fact that I simply didn't want to let him down."

"I believed everything he said and if he told me to do something, I would do it. If he told me to go and jump off a cliff, I would say 'OK, Fred, for you I will do anything'... that turned into a great relationship and he is somebody that if I see him in the paddock now, we will also meet each other fondly."

**Question: What advice would you give to a young racing driver starting out their career today?**

**Russell Scobie**

**Via email**

**SB:** "There are so many things. There are many different kinds of driver, aren't there? There are drivers who have the backing and the parental backing that can afford for them to go a long way."

"But a lot of these guys – although I think Lando Norris is the exception to this, because he is just brilliant and he had the fire in his belly – you have wonder how strong the desire it. If you want something bad enough, you can achieve it and that is how I got there. Maybe I didn't have the most talent, but maybe I wanted it more than some of the other guys around at the time. I wanted to be a racing driver so badly. I didn't just stumble across a career, it was something I put my heart and soul into."

"I put every minute of every day into it, and I continue to enjoy every minute of every day now I am doing it. I wasn't as talented as Jules Bianchi and I wasn't as quick as Romain Grosjean but I forced myself to be as fast as them."

"I think if you want something badly enough and you are willing to push yourself to go that extra mile, it can work. And pushing yourself if not just about what you can do inside the car, it is outside the car too. Are you going to be constantly emailing people? Are you going to go and try to find the backers? Are you going to push yourself in the gym? Are you going to want it just that little bit more than the next driver?"

"If you are going to give it everything you have got in order to try and make a career of it, and you can look yourself in the mirror and answer all of those questions I have just asked with a 'yes', then you have half a chance of making it."

"A lot of these young hopefuls will be coming up against drivers who do have the backing and a lot of those guys are the guys who are just going through the motions. But, they will still continue to get the drives because of the deep pockets. This is what the young talents are up against. They just have to work twice as hard, but that isn't just in motorsport, that is almost like a life lesson: if you want something, go and grab it for yourself. Go and take your opportunity. Be relentless, because it is a tough world out there and it is not easy. There are no handouts for anyone."

**"I am not ready to quit motor racing just yet..."**

**Sam Bird**

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# FEATURE



Bobby Thompson  
nerfs Ricky Collard



Skeg Vegas played host to BTCC

## RICKY AND BOBBY FIGHT OVER THE SHORT OVAL SPOILS

The BTCC stars came out to play in BriSCA F1 stockcars at Skegness. By **Matt James**



Dan Welch and Rick Parfitt were two of the tin-top racers to try their luck

**W**hat happens when you take 10 tin-top drivers who aren't supposed to hit each other and put them in 700bhp short-oval cars where full contact is allowed? We were intrigued and, as it turns out, so were the drivers.

Former BTCC racer and ITV4 pundit Paul O'Neill went to a BriSCA F1 recently and was bowled over. A few tweets and social media messages later, and 10 saloon car racing stars were

offered cars to go and settle a few scores at Skegness last weekend.

They were all gifted pukka race-ready BriSCA F1 cars to go and take part in a 16-lap invitation race and the results were bruising, thunderous and exciting. The BTCC pack were let loose in front of an expectant crowd ahead of the Under 25s Gala Night at the Lincolnshire venue.

Each of the star drivers emerged with a smile on their faces and some sore parts of their anatomy and a new-found respect for the regulars.

The 2022 Jack Sears Trophy winner Bobby Thompson was the man with the biggest smile after

getting by Ricky Collard to claim top spot with three laps left in the meeting curtain-raiser. All of those involved stayed at the track for the main event, chatted with fans and signed autographs. But, most of all, they gained a respect for the men and women who regularly pilot the V8 missiles at close quarters.

The success of the event, which was put together with the help of racer Paul Hines, Paul O'Neill himself and BriSCA guru Neil Randon, was unquestioned.

The trouble is, they all want another go. Who is up for Skegness this time next year?

### THE DRIVERS' REACTION

**Driver:** Bobby Thompson  
**Usual 2022 mount:** Seat Cupra R  
**BriSCA F1 race:** Winner  
**Car owner:** Simon Traves

"I expected a BriSCA F1 car to feel heavier than they do. They aren't what you would call nimble, but they are way more responsive than I thought they might be before I got in one. They are pretty direct. But that once you have got used to when you have the steering wheel straight, because they all have an amount of stagger built into the set-up."

"That is something that not a lot of us have experienced before: a car that is meant to only turn one way. In a BTCC car, you are constantly using the brake pedal to manipulate the car to turn. With the BriSCA F1 car, when I found myself using less brake to roll into the corner, I found that the chassis actually wanted to help me. We are used to a car that is very flat and equal."

"It was mega, but I didn't go flat on the throttle once all day because I don't think you need it. It is all about wheelspin management. The only other crazy thing in the contact. Sure, in a touring car, we hit but we are more-or-less going exactly the same speed. On a short oval, when you roll off the brake into a corner

  
and go into someone, there can be a much bigger speed difference. It can be quite an abrupt stop. Also, there are some crumple zones on a BTCC, and there are none here! The only crumple zone on a BriSCA F1 car is the bit that is strapped into the cockpit. My balls are feeling it."

"My move to take the lead from Ricky Collard was fine by me, but he doesn't seem to share that opinion. I am sure we will have a couple of beers later and smooth things over. Obviously, his second name makes him quite big in these parts (short ovals). I think he was expecting a big win tonight and he was close, but he didn't quite get it. As soon as I saw the number 4 board come out and I knew there wasn't long to go, I knew I had to get the job done. I had done some hits in practice and in the race that big to get used to it, because I had to get a feel for what a hit was like. But, every time my foot came off the brake and the pads were off the discs, I was hating it

because I knew it would hurt. It hurts the hitter as much as the one being hit."

"As much as I keep thinking I would love to come back and have a go with the proper lads and lasses, they would run rings around me."

**Driver:** Ricky Collard  
**Usual 2022 mount:** Toyota Corolla  
**BriSCA F1 race:** 2nd  
**Car owner:** Jason Cull

"It was all a bit of a rush for me to get there because I had been slightly under the weather the night before, so when I arrived it was too late for me to do lots of sessions. In fact, I only got one!"

"In the end, I had to swap cars for the race too and I was in Jason Cull's machine. It was a really tight squeeze for me even to fit in it, and I am not the biggest of lads..."

"Despite all that, it was such a fantastic experience. I was blown away by the power, but I found it manageable if you were careful on the throttle."

"All of the drivers were really welcoming and the fans were just mind-blowing. I wish I had more time to meet them all."

"In the race, I found I clicked with the driving style really quickly and I certainly had my eyes on the race

  
victory as soon as I hit the front. I wasn't looking in my mirror because that was one of the bits of advice we had been given before the race and so I didn't know that Bobby Thompson was catching me up. Then, going into the first corner, I got an almighty whack. I was struggling with moving inside the cockpit because I was so cramped, and I am sure if I had fitted better, I could have held the slide and carried on to win. I will definitely give it another go in the future."

**Driver:** Paul O'Neill  
**Usual 2022 mount:** a microphone  
**BriSCA F1 race:** 3rd  
**Car owner:** Paul Hines

"It was amazing that I had to wind myself back a bit because I was running well, and I thought 'I can have a proper go here'. I didn't know where I was in the race, but I knew I must have made a few places up and I felt like

I was getting quicker and quicker. The car simply has so much throttle it felt a little bit like the DFV-engined cars I have driven in tests for Motorsport News before. The car itself wasn't hard to control, it was more analogue than digital. It was interesting because when you throttle up, you feel like you're on full power but you are nowhere near. There was probably another quarter of the power to go, but I didn't venture into that territory."

"Now I have done that race and if I had a good car to use like Paul's, I would definitely have another go. But I am knackered: I am 15 and a half stone, diabetic and I am ruined after those 16 laps. And I know that what we just did was like category F compared to what the top boys do. I have huge respect for them."

"I have been educated by everybody, and the crowd are so much more knowledgeable than

you would think about the cars, and it was an amazing paddock."

**Driver:** Josh Cook  
**Usual 2022 mount:** Honda Civic  
**Type R**  
**BriSCA F1 race:** 4th  
**Car owner:** Mat Newson

"I have to be honest, I have no idea what I have just been through! It all

  
went so quickly. I started at the back but I was powering through, and then I made a little mistake which let Paul O'Neill through, which was annoying. I didn't know what I was going to do would cause a mistake until I had already done it. I wouldn't do that again. There is a technique that you need to adhere to. I found it OK, it wasn't really odd, and that is probably because of some of the historic racing I have done with the bundles of power and no grip. I am kind of used to that feel. It is just really strange that all the BriSCA F1 car wants to do is turn left."



Rick Parfitt (l) and Dexter Patterson get personal...



Thompson: one happy driver...



The BTCC men came together to sample something rather different in Skegness last weekend

**Driver: Aiden Moffat**  
Usual 2022 mount: Infiniti Q50  
BrSCA F1 race: 5th  
Car owner: Chris Cowley

"I loved every minute of it, but it was really hard work. I also have heard a rumour that a few of the guys had snuck off testing before this event. I had the chance to do the five practice sessions before the race itself, but the engine threw a belt on my first run so effectively I entered the race with no testing at all."

"I had a great time. I got into a bit of a tangle with Josh Cook as we were pushing each other out of the way and I clipped the wall on one lap. I thought 'it can't be that solid'. Trust me, it was - I nearly knocked myself out! That made me dizzy for a couple of laps."

"It was such amazing fun and I would definitely do it again. I found it very easy to under-appreciate just how amazing these cars are, how good the racing is and how good the drivers are: it is very easy to overlook it."

**Driver: Ryan Bensley**  
Usual 2022 mount: Honda Civic  
BrSCA F1 race: 6th  
Car owner: Tom Dayman

"It was a really amazing experience but utterly terrifying at the same time. You can't see behind you and I had people hitting me all over the place, which I am not used to at all. It happens now and again on the



circuits, but it is not deliberate. "It is just the shock of getting hit, I think. But these cars are so awesome to drive and I have so much respect for the guys and girls who race them regularly. I hope none of them come circuit racing because I think we would all be in trouble."

"The power is actually quite nice, but there is a lot to learn in terms of getting used to the way the cars handle. It is all about getting into a rhythm. It is easy to go around at a speed that is there or thereabouts, but it is all about unlocking that extra

little bit. And then you have to race in traffic, and that adds a whole different dimension into it."

**Driver: Carl Boardley**  
Usual 2022 mount: Seat Cupra R  
BrSCA F1 race: 7th  
Car owner: Dean Whitwell

"It was really really enjoyable although I had a little issue where every time I got tapped or hit someone, it would jump out of gear which was making my life tough, but that is the way it goes sometimes."

"I would definitely do it again, but I certainly wouldn't muck about with all the nutters who are the regular drivers. I wouldn't want to have a target on my back. In our race, I was thinking about being able to follow people in and I thought I have given two or three of them in front of me a proper tidy hit, but it didn't really move them out of the way at all. I think now I understand how hard



have to hit them to make a pass. "Oval racing is my background and I have always had massive respect for these guys but I appreciate the F1 boys a little bit more now. It was kind of them to let us have a go."

**Driver: Dan Welch**  
Usual 2022 mount: road-going Fiat Panda  
BrSCA F1 race: 8th  
Car owner: Mark Adkins

"It was amazing fun and brilliant, but my car was set-up for a shale



circuit so we had a bit of work to do to it, but it was a brilliant craic. It was great to be able to go out there and use the bumpers a bit. "You have got more power than you need under your foot, and so it is bound to put a grin on your face. I would 100% do it again, but I would need to do research into set-ups, go testing and really refine the car. It would make a big difference."

**Driver: Rick Parfitt**  
Usual 2022 mount: Infiniti Q50  
BrSCA F1 race: 9th  
Car owner: Mark Sargent

"I am actually annoyed: I think I could have won it. I got up to third place and I got turned around by Dexter Patterson. But when I got going again, I was catching hand over fist and I genuinely felt connected to the car. I really like it and it definitely suits me - and that is the last thing I thought I would be saying!"

"It is all about rhythm and it is repetitive. While it looks wild and crazy, there is a finesse to it and you have to be neat and tidy and smooth. If you get that lap on lap, it starts to feel really great. What a fantastic experience."



**Driver: Dexter Patterson**  
Usual 2022 mount: Infiniti Q50  
BrSCA F1 race: DNF  
Car owner: Ben Howard

"It was really good. I managed to take part in a couple of practice



sessions before the race and it was great to try and get used to this type of car. I have never really done anything like this before."

"They are just so stiff, there is no give in them. It is not so hard to get used to the power, but the tough bit is getting into the corners and trying to get it pointing in the right direction to come out of the corner the way you want it to."

"I only got a couple of laps before I got tangled up, but that has just made me more hungry to come back and have another go."

## THOMPSON LEAVES IT LATE TO POUNCE FOR HIS MAIDEN BrSCA F1 VICTORY

There were only a handful of corners left, and it looked like a shoo-in for tin-top star Ricky Collard. It had been a remarkable afternoon for grandson of Hot Rod legend Mick 'Duffy' Collard already.

Delayed on his way to the track, the 26-year-old was forced to swap cars at the last-minute to a machine proffered by regular racer Jason Cull. His late arrival meant he only got a few laps of practice too.

Starting from the fifth spot on the grid, drawn in a random order, he was quickly scything his way up the position chart with some prodigious use of his front bumper. Early leader was poleman Ryan Bensley, the Honda Civic Cup title winner who had been partly responsible for inspiring the idea behind the race in the first place, in the car lent to him by Tom Dayman.

Once Collard had got the jump on him, he was able to pull out a sizeable gap. But trouble was coming. Bobby Thompson was flying in Simon Traves' machine. From near the back, he nudged his way into second spot around the halfway mark by following Aiden Moffat into the Seaside turn in fine BrSCA F1 style. Moffat, in Chris Cowley's machine, would drop to fifth in the final placings.

Thompson left it until a couple of laps remaining before he eased off the

brake going into Turn 1 and wallop into Collard, pushing him wide and assuming control for the rest of the event.

Behind the action-packed top two, Paul O'Neill completed the podium in Paul Hines' car. He had been involved in a race-long battle with friend Josh Cook, in the car usually raced by Mat Newson. Once they had passed Moffat, Cook slipped up and allowed his foe ahead.

Behind Moffat was Bensley, and he fended off Carl Boardley, who was struggling with transmission problems in the car belonging to Dean Whitwell. Dan Welch drove Mark Adkins' car to eighth place after battling to find traction throughout the course of the practice and race.

The two stragglers were Rick Parfitt, in Mark Sargent's machine, and poor Dexter Patterson in the Ben Howard car. It only took them a couple of corners to get together and fire hard into the inside tyre barriers. Parfitt did extract himself though and was thrilled with his pace thereafter, whereas Patterson was forced into the role of spectator.

### Results

1 Bobby Thompson; 2 Ricky Collard; 3 Paul O'Neill; 4 Josh Cook; 5 Aiden Moffat; 6 Ryan Bensley; 7 Carl Boardley; 8 Dan Welch; 9 Rick Parfitt Jr; NF: Dexter Patterson.



Thompson was the toast of the town after claiming the win

# RACING REPORTS

## BRANDS HATCH: MSVR BY BRIAN PHILLIPS

NOVEMBER 19-20

Photos: Gary Hawkins



IP Racing head the way in the EnduroKa clash



Guesting Jones and Gilham took the Trackday win

## IP RACING HOLD ON IN LAST-GASP KA DASH

**The leading teams in this year's EnduroKa long-distance race series duelled in the dark for the top honour at their seasonal finale, the Brands Hatch IndyKa 500, and after 415 laps IP Racing took the chequered flag just over half a second in front of AxiaMetrics.**

Adam Blair was at the wheel for IP in the critical phase, building on the earlier efforts of Daniel Silvester and Scott Parkin, and winning a four-minute shootout following the last of 18 safety car interventions. Pipped at the post were AxiaMetrics' Chris Weatherill, Dominic Jackson and Chris Dovell. A lapped car between

the two leaders as they approached the green flag denied Weatherill his best chance of an attack.

Nick Tandy led the NAPA Racing squad to a lapped third place, co-driving with regular partners Lewis Selby and Elliot Mason. Their car was always in the running and looked a strong tip for victory until a refuelling mistake earned a two-lap penalty. A further unplanned stop was needed to replace a failed rear light bulb.

However, long after the podium celebrations news came that second and third-place cars had both been disqualified. The cylinder head on Weatherill's car was found to be machined beyond

normal tolerances, and the NAPA team did not comply with official requests to remove their cylinder head. Tenth-placed 3 Amigos were also disqualified, this time for an underweight car.

Sukaru Racing's Tristan Judge, Peter Dignan and Chris Hilsdon put in an under-the-radar run to a fine fourth place, subsequently promoted to second.

Lucas Romanek had a chance of taking the United Formula Ford title and did everything possible to improve his prospects with a double win on Saturday. Alex Walker gave him a hard time, but a jump-start penalty cost Walker the race-one win. Morgan Quinn

arrived on level points with the absent Colin Queen and stayed out of trouble to top the table. All three drove Van Diemens.

Darren Goes won last year's MSV Supercup, and on Saturday he added the revamped Turismo X title, thanks to Adam Blair's misfortune. Goes won both races at the wheel of his Audi RS3 but Blair's Seat Supercopa let him down in race one and he could do no better than third at the second attempt. Blair led the points coming to Brands, but slipped behind when the Seat's engine stopped without warning.

A slow start from pole and a first lap spin on cold tyres didn't stop

Alex Jones and Team Hard's Tony Gilham winning the Trackday Championship race in their shared Golf. As a guest entry they didn't score points, so the focus was on John Lyne's bid to become champion in his BMW. Main rival Kevin Stirling was ruled out in a multiple accident at the start, and Lyne scored a comfortable second place behind the Golf.

The non-championship Trackday Trophy went to Stewart Donovan's Toyota Celica, thanks to spending less time in the pits, while still complying with the minimum time requirement, than the Golf of Alex and Daniel Read.

### RACE WINNERS

**EnduroKa Indy 500**  
IP Racing (Adam Blair, Daniel Silvester & Scott Parkin)

**United Formula Ford/Champion of Brands Races 1 & 2:** Lucas Romanek (Van Diemen JL13)

**Turismo X Races 1 & 2:** Darren Goes (Audi RS3)

**Trackday Championship**  
Alex Jones/Tony Gilham (VW Golf)

**Trackday Trophy**  
Stewart Donovan (Toyota Celica)

## ILKLEY JUBILEE: ILKLEY AND DISTRICT MC BY LYNSEY PROCTER

NOVEMBER 20

## STANIFORTHS WIN DELAYED ILKLEY JUBILEE

**Father-and-daughter Darell and Nicky Staniforth took their Mini Cooper to overall victory despite having navigational dramas on the last regularity as the Ilkley Jubilee Historic Rally finally ran after being delayed from its September date.**

The event started at Leyburn Auction Mart and provided six regularities and nine tests. The organisers made the decision to reverse the seeding to allow novices to run at the front and finish before darkness and at 0831hrs crews began to head out to start the first regularity just south of Constable Burton. A jogularity with three timings points was designed to ease crews gently into the event.

The event had a nice flow to it, with the next regularity taking in Kirkby Fleetham and Great Langton before pausing for coffee at Ellerton Lakes

allowing crews to work out the instructions handed to them for the next regularity, taking in maps 93 and 92.

After working the navigators hard, the event then ran the first five tests at a farm near Bellerby. Previous Skoda works driver Les Andrew with navigator Nick Middleton was one of many crews to enjoy the tests.

After all cars had completed the tests, they returned to Leyburn Mart for the lunch halt. Regularity five was back to being plotted on a map and took crews on the back roads East of Leyburn before the route returned to some of the morning's tests.

This quick blast woke everyone up enough for them to tackle regularity six, the longest of the day. This was an unknown to all crews and would need to be plotted on the move using a London Map. Pre-plotted points needed to be avoided or visited in



The winning Mini of Staniforth father-and-daughter pair

a certain order to get the time controls and the all-important code boards. Many crews struggled here as the rally slipped into darkness and caused a slight shake up in the results.

As the final event of the HRCR Motorsport News Clubmans Rally Championship season, many crews were keen to finish

on a high. Chris Haygarth and Colin Martin took first novice award finishing in an impressive seventh overall in their Toyota MR2.

Graeme Cornthwaite and Lynsey Procter took the first expert award in their Mini, finishing sixth overall after losing time on the final regularity.



Dunning/Carr took second eight seconds shy of Mini

The Masters award was taken by Jon Dunning and Henry Carr in their Ford Escort RS2000, having repaired the clutch after it failed on Rally of the Tests earlier in the month.

**Results**  
**Organiser:** Ilkley District Motor Club  
**When:** November 20  
**Championships:** MN HRCR Clubmans  
**Starters:** 46  
**1 Darell Staniforth/Nicky Staniforth (Mini**

Cooper S) 2m42s; 2 John Dunning/Henry Carr (Ford Escort RS2000) +8s; 3 Leigh Powley/Brian Coff (Toyota Corolla); 4 Steve Head/Mark Appleton (Ford Escort); 5 Nick Pullan/Ian Canavan (Peugeot 205GTi); 6 Graeme Cornthwaite/Lynsey Procter (Morris Mini); 7 Chris Haygarth/Colin Martin (Toyota MR2); 8 Roger Fildes/Martin Phaff (Ford Escort); 9 Clive Baty/Crow (Renault 5 Alpine); 10 Tim Tordoff/Ian Frazer (Peugeot 205GTi).  
**Class winners:** Cornthwaite/Procter, Haygarth/Martin.

# RALLY REPORTS

CADWELL PARK STAGES: NORTH HUMBERSIDE MOTOR CLUB BY PETER SCHERER NOVEMBER 20

## GRIFFITHS CHARGES TO HIS FIRST RALLY WIN AT CADWELL PARK



Former GT racer John Griffiths won at Cadwell Park



Andy Scott led the chase of Griffiths

**John Griffiths and Emma Morrison kept their Ford Fiesta R5 ahead of the pack to score an impressive victory at Cadwell Park in the second round of the MN-supported Circuit Rally Championship.**

On the opening stage Griffiths was three seconds down on the similar car of Paul Murro/Callum Cross, before turning his deficit into a four-second lead at the second attempt. "We lost some time though as we were on the rev limiter on the straights," said Griffiths.

Josh Payton/Jamie Vaughan (Ford Escort Mk2) had been only a second off Griffiths' time on the opening stage but had to give best to Andy Scott/Laura Connell (Fiesta S2000T). "I was still cautious though, as we had been warned there was oil down," Scott added. Ollie O'Donovan/Ashleigh Morris (Hyundai R5) was a further six seconds down in fifth after the second stage, with Kieran Hankin/James Swallow (Peugeot 208 T16 R5) sixth.

While Griffiths trebled his lead on stage three, Murro was still five seconds clear of third. O'Donovan and Hankin held

fifth and sixth, but behind them it was a tie for seventh, between the Escorts of Martin Hodgson/Tony Jones and Steve/Jack Tilburn, with Andy Corner/Ade Camp (Peugeot 205 GTi) and Nick Whale/Callum Young (Ford Fiesta Proto) filling the rest of the top 10.

There was one more stage before a long lunch break, which gave most of the crews plenty of time to question their tyre choice for the afternoon stages as the track continued to dry.

Griffiths was quicker again on SS4 before lunch, but only one second up on Murro and both Scott and O'Donovan outpaced Payton. Scott was back into third, while O'Donovan was joint fourth. "I was on old wets from the start and didn't see any point in changing," said O'Donovan, with Scott following suit. Hankin consolidated sixth, with seventh-placed Hodgson pulling a six-second gap over class rival Tilburn.

While his rivals stayed on wet tyres, Murro opted to try super softs for SS5, but Griffiths, Scott, Payton and O'Donovan were all quicker. "They felt OK but then I saw my time," said Murro, with

Scott now only four seconds off second place. "I will be pushing on now, as we are not here to make up the numbers," Scott admitted, before reducing the gap on stage six. Having climbed to ninth, Whale retired on SS6, sliding off and hitting the barriers head on at Coppice.

It was starting to look safe for Griffiths as the battle for second intensified, but the last two stages were ran the dark. Scott had beaten Murro's time, but then stage seven was cancelled after Payton rolled spectacularly on the steep drop down to the pitlane and so it was straight into the final stage.

Although O'Donovan was quickest, Griffiths took his first win with 28 seconds in hand over Scott, with Murro losing out by just three seconds as he slipped to third. O'Donovan and Hankin were fourth and fifth respectively and Tilburn claimed a late sixth, when Hodgson suffered alternator problems and retired on the last stage.

The late retirements brought Tony Robinson/Paul Spooner (Skoda Fabia R5) up to take seventh, from class winners Corner and Paul Walker/Liam

Whiteley (Mitsubishi Lancer E9), while Paul Kirtley/David Jones (Subaru Impreza WRC) rounded off the top 10.

In Class 1 Charlie Barlow/Tommi Meadows (Nissan Micra 1400S) turned a 55s stage-one lead into a six-minute victory over Kay Thompson/Charlotte Wainwright (Micra). Ian Barnes/Jason Cutter (Ford Ka) had been second on stage one but hit a gatepost on the paddock exit on stage two and retired.

After playing second fiddle to the Vauxhall Nova of William and Alex Routledge at the start, Daniel Poole/Alex Irvine Holtom (Vauxhall Corsa S1600) eased away to win Class 2. Payton had kept Corner at a safe distance in Class 3 until he rolled out on SS7. So Corner took the class.

Hodgson eased away from Tilburn in the Class 4 Escort duel but Tilburn took the spoils when the final stage claimed his rival, while Alasdair Stables/Neil Jones (Vauxhall Chevette HSR) came home second. Walker was a dominant Class 5 winner, having headed Nathan Bolton/Jason McTear (Lancer E9) car all day.

### RESULTS

#### Cadwell Park Stages When: November 20

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	John Griffiths/Emma Morrison	Ford Fiesta R5	36m58s
2	Andy Scott/Laura Connell	Ford Fiesta S2000T	+28s
3	Paul Murro/Callum Cross	Ford Fiesta R5	+31s
4	Ollie O'Donovan/Ashleigh Morris	Hyundai i20 R5	+43s
5	Kieran Hankin/James Swallow	Peugeot 208 T16 R5	+1m14s
6	Stephen Tilburn/Jack Tilburn	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m03s
7	Tony Robinson/Paul Spooner	Skoda Fabia R5	+2m15s
8	Andy Corner/Ade Camp	Peugeot 205 GTi	+2m31s
9	Paul Walker/Liam Whiteley	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+3m09s
10	Paul Kirtley/David Jones	Subaru Impreza WRC	+3m09s

Class winners: Charlie Barlow/Tommi Meadows (Nissan Micra 1400S); Daniel Poole/Irvine Holtom (Vauxhall Corsa S1600); Corner/Camp; Tilburn/Tilburn; Walker/Whiteley.



Payton was top 2WD until he rolled his Ford Escort

GLYN MEMORIAL STAGES (ANGLESEY): CAERNARVONSHIRE AND ANGLESEY MC BY IAN MILLS

NOVEMBER 19-20

## EDWARDS TAKES THE BATTLE OF ANGLESEY BY A SECOND

**A mere second separated the top two crews after two days and fourteen stages of the Glyn Memorial Rally, with Gareth Edwards/Tim Nunn fending off a late charge from Rob Hughes/Sion Cunniff.**

The eight Saturday stages were run in cold but dry conditions and at the end of them Edwards/Nunn (Darrian GTR+) had built up a lead of 46 seconds, having led from the start. Last year's

winners, Hughes/Cunniff (Ford Fiesta R5), had struggled with finding the correct tyre choice during the day but were in second.

Rain started to fall on Sunday morning and the Fiesta started to eat into the Darrian's advantage. After SS12, the gap was down to five seconds but SS13 proved a dramatic one. On a greasy surface Hughes spun his car on to the grass and struggled to regain the tarmac. At almost exactly the

same time, Edwards spun and stalled his Darrian. Remarkably they both posted the same time on the test and remained five seconds apart with one stage left.

On the final test, Hughes took fastest time but Edwards was only four seconds behind and claimed the win by the narrowest of margins. Barry Morris made an overnight journey from Ireland, as he and co-driver Dafydd Evans came off the

reserve list to take the start. They were another crew to indulge in a spin on the treacherous SS13 but survived to take a clear third place.

Fourth place was sufficient for Wayne Jones to secure the Welsh Tarmac title, although partner Jonathan Davies, had to concede the co-drivers' crown to John Davies, who finished in seventh with Dave Willett.

David Burden led the Glyn

Memorial Junior Rally for the first 11 stages, but Oliver Phillips had never been far behind and took the lead on SS12, then cantered away to

win by 22s. Burden, who had already secured the English Championship and sold the car in which he was competing, decided not to fight the issue.

### Results

Organiser: Caernarvonshire & Anglesey Motor Club When: November 19-20 Where:

Trac Mon Championships: WAMC & ANWC Stages: 14 Starters: 83.

1 Gareth Edwards/Tim Nunn (Darrian GTR+) 81m34s; 2 Rob Hughes/Sion Cunniff (Ford Fiesta R5) +1s; 3 Barry Morris/Dafydd Evans (Darrian T90 GTR+) 4 Wayne Jones/Jonathan Davies (Darrian GTR); 5 Roger Moran/Den Golding (Skoda Fabia R5); 6 Jason Wilson/Lee Wilson (Darrian T90 GTR); 7 Dave Willett/John Davies (Ford Escort); 8 Chris Simmons/Andy Moss (Darrian T90 GTR); 9 Berwyn Evans/Mari Häf Evans (Escort); 10 Mike Taylor/Louise Gilks (Talbot Sunbeam Lotus). Class winners: Jonathan Davies/Chris Row (Vauxhall Corsa); Sion Jones/Gethin Williams (Citroen Saxo); Wilson/Wilson; Hughes/Cunniff; Oliver Phillips/Barry Young (VW Up).

## COLUMNIST

# LOUIS HARVEY



*The 18-year-old newly crowned Ultimate Karting champion talks about his prize GB4 test and what's next*



Harvey got his latest car test

**L**ast week I got to test a GB4 single-seater car at Bedford Autodrome with Scorpio Motorsport, a prize drive offered by Scorpio for me winning the Ultimate Karting Championship this year in Senior Rotax.

The GB4 test was mega, it was so much different to karting and it was really enjoyable. I was getting quicker and quicker throughout the day, and that fact just makes you enjoy it more.

The track was wet at the start of the day, and then I did one dry run on the slicks. That was a lot different, but it was a lot more enjoyable because you can carry so much more speed through the corners. Every lap I was getting more confident with the car and braking a bit later; in some of the fast stuff I was carrying a lot of speed which I didn't think I'd be able to do. The harder you go into the corner the more grip you've got, it's a weird feeling, but it's really good.

The main things in adapting were that the weight transfer's a lot different in cars than karting, and you've got so much more power and you've got gears so are having to ease the throttle on.

It wasn't the first time I'd driven a single-seater, as I also tested a Formula 4 car with Argenti at Pembrey a couple of months ago. I have driven for two years with Argenti in Senior Rotax karting and the team has been like a family to us. Argenti offered us a half-day in their F4 car shared with my team-mate. When I tried the F4 car it was wet; I got one slick run but the track was still quite wet. But I enjoyed both the GB4 and F4 car the same.

The UKC season went really well, it was really well run and our main highlight was winning the Clay Pigeon round on slicks in the wet. Then at the Three Sisters title-decider there was a lot of pressure, and we managed to win in the pre-final so wrapped up the championship with a race to go and I could then relax. But that feeling of winning the title was just amazing, the whole atmosphere of the win was really good.

At the time the prize GB4 test was announced I was leading the championship so a little bit more pressure was added but I dealt with it quite well and the GB4 test is something I'll never forget.

I first sat in a kart when I was five years old. We were on holiday in Cornwall and my dad



The five-year-old Harvey tries kart...



Harvey (l) got a prize GB4 run with Scorpio team

took us to a kart track he'd been to as a kid. And I just got into a kart and instantly fell in love with it. I just remember loving the speed, because I was never really interested in football or anything, and the fact that I was so in control of this kart. And I never looked back since.

From then we had this indoor kart track that's near us that for around the next two years we went to every now and then. And then my dad said if I can get a certain lap time he'll buy me my own kart. I managed to do it, we bought our own kart and then on my eighth birthday we did my first race at Clay Pigeon. Ever since my first race I've just never stopped.

I really want to do car racing next year, either single-seater or some sort of tin-top racing. We've been in karting now for 10 years so I feel we've got to cut strings and move on to whatever the next thing is.

Precisely what we do next is all budget dependent. We've looked at a few types of tin-top racing. The Mini Challenge has caught our eye because my team-mate from last year Oliver Meadows raced that all year and he's said good things about it. And it just looks like a good championship plus some of the rounds are alongside the British Touring Car Championship so they're on television. I've watched touring cars since I was a kid, alongside Formula 1. Touring cars looks like a good option and it always provides really good racing.

Obviously we'll always want to do single-seaters, it is always the dream for everybody, but it is a lot of money compared to other car racing. But I'm not too fussed. Something on four wheels, that does it for me.

*"I was getting quicker throughout the day and that makes you enjoy it more"*

# WHAT'S ON

## BOOK REVIEW

### Driven to Crime: True stories of wrongdoing in motor racing

By Crispian Besley

We know that one should not put anything past certain people involved in motorsport. And first-time author Crispian Besley has sought to gather the

many tales of misdeed in a £40, 480-page, hardback just published by Evro Publishing.

Besley explores no fewer than 66 cases, giving each their own chapter, and appropriately there is an eclectic mix, from the sometimes comical to the often despicable and

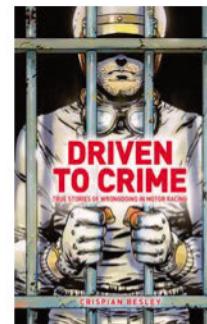
occasionally tragic. Some link directly to racing whereas with others it's racing-linked individuals getting up to no good elsewhere.

To give you some idea of the range, we have Nelson Piquet Jr in Crashgate, Colin Chapman's DeLorean links, and the young chap who took a road-going VW

Polo onto a live Brands Hatch circuit in 2014. Ian Flux's soliciting seems though a conspicuous omission.

It's written in an engaging style, and with each tale only covering a few pages it rattles along. It's an absorbing and informative read.

Graham Keilloh



## TV GUIDE

If you're missing the Formula 1 season already, Sky Sports F1 is showing in full all of the races in turn from the campaign just finished, starting with the Bahrain Grand Prix at 1200hrs tomorrow (Friday). The run continues throughout the weekend.

Eurosport 1 has FIA World Touring Car Cup action from earlier in the year on Monday morning.

At 1000hrs-1030hrs it shows the Pau round and that's followed immediately by a Hungaroring review at 1030hrs-1100hrs.

Later on Monday you can watch highlights of this weekend's Extreme E season-closer from Uruguay, on ITV4 at 1855hrs-2000hrs. While early on Sunday, at 0605hrs-0700hrs, ITV4 also has Motorsport UK

showing Porsche Carrera Cup GB and Ginetta GT4 Supercup from Silverstone. It's shown again on ITV's main channel early on Monday at 0300hrs.

While for something a little different there's Red Bull Soapbox Race: London's Greatest Moments on Saturday on the Dave channel at 1500hrs-1700hrs.

Graham Keilloh



Uruguay's Extreme E action will be shown on ITV4

### LIVE TV

#### EXTREME E ENERGY X-PRIX URUGUAY

**Final:** Sunday,  
1600hrs-1800hrs,  
Virgin Media Two

#### FIA WORLD TOURING CAR CUP JEDDAH

**Qualifying:**  
Saturday, 1525hrs-  
1650hrs, Eurosport 1

#### Race 1: Sunday, 1630hrs-1735hrs, Eurosport 1

**Race 2:** Sunday,  
1900hrs-2005hrs,  
Eurosport 2

## WHAT'S ON

### RALLYING SUNDAY

**Colin Eamore Memorial Rally (Deenethorpe)**  
Lincoln Motor Cycle and Car Club (no spectators)  
colinemoremorialrally.co.uk

**Winter Stages Rally (Croft)**  
Northallerton AC and Darlington DMC (spectators admitted)  
Croftcircuit.co.uk

Details correct at time of going to press. Please check with organisers before travelling

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Motorsport News  
Kelsey Media  
The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Yalding, Maidstone Kent ME18 6AL

### EDITORIAL

**Editor:** Matt James  
Tel: 07884 117139  
Email: Matt.James@kelsey.co.uk

**Deputy Editor:** Graham Keilloh  
Tel: 07973 829291  
Email: Graham.Keilloh@kelsey.co.uk

**Art Editor:** Mike Stokoe  
Tel: 07957 282340  
Email: mike.stokoe@gmail.com

**Contributors**  
**Historics Editor:** Paul Lawrence  
**Rallycross Editor:** Hal Ridge  
**Columnist at large:** David Addison  
**Columnist and track tester:** Andrew Jordan  
**Technical Editor:** Carl Faux

**ADVERTISING**  
**Director:** David Lerpiniere  
Tel: 01732 445326  
Email: david@talkmediasales.co.uk

**Sales Director:** Russell Bedford  
Tel: 01732 445328  
Email: russell.bedford@talkmediasales.co.uk

**Ad Manager:** Natalie Harman  
Tel: 01732 446757  
Email: natalie.harman@talkmediasales.co.uk

**PRODUCTION**  
**Advert Production Manager:** Matt Ryan  
Tel: 01732 445755  
Email: Production@talkmediasales.co.uk

**MANAGEMENT**  
**Chief Executive:** Steve Wright  
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Tel: 0330 390 6555

Distribution in Northern Ireland and the  
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He's a happy camper! Peter Atkins captured this oddity at Santa Pod Raceway recently



Sam Nudd was at Snetterton



Richard Salisbury's Escort shot



Another photo from Sam Nudd



More fun from David Harbey

## NEXT EDITION

## OUT THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1

**The 2022 Motorsport News Award winners are revealed!**

**Don't miss our special bumper issue where we crown our heroes of the year...**



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### Andy Welch

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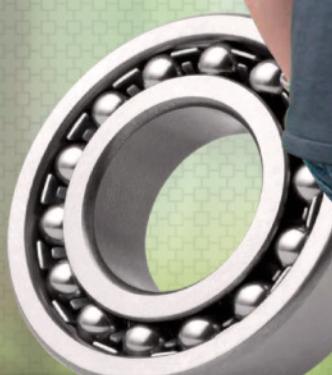
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